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HOLIDAY CLASSIC

Edmonton's seasonal classic the Singing Christmas Tree is back for its 43rd year. The Vegas-style show features more than 100 carollers and guest performers, and takes the stage Friday night at the Northern Jubilee Auditorium. See story on page 2.
LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO

Budget moves could improve transit service

Talking transit. Motions would add late-night service, ease packed routes

RYAN TUMILTY
ryan.tumilty@metronews.ca

Some city councillors are looking to improve transit service for late-night users and riders on busy routes, but they will have to extract the cash from the budget process first.

Coun. Ben Henderson and Coun. Amarjeet Sohi both have motions aimed at improving transit service that will be voted on next week.

For $1.3 million, Henderson is looking to improve transit service with five late-night routes that would spider out from downtown and Whyte Avenue to points across the city.

He said the current last buses are full.

"The buses that we run right now are all full so I think there is a huge demand for this and we are just not serving it," he said.

He said there is plenty of interest in this kind of service.

"It has never just been about the bar crowd. It is about shift workers, it is about people working in those late-night businesses," he said.

Sohi's motion would cost $907,000 and would reduce pressure on crowded routes that run all over the city.

Sohi said many of these routes have people standing at all times, which he said hurts riders and the system.

"They get tired of standing all the time and then they make other choices, then they don't take transit anymore."

City officials said the routes need the extra capacity, because there is simply no more room on the busses.

"They will have to pass by passengers because they will just not have any more room on them," said transit director of service development Ken Koropseski.

City council begins voting on the budget Monday.

Quoted

"It has never just been about the bar crowd. It is about shift workers, it is about people working in those late-night businesses."

Coun. Ben Henderson on improving late-night bus services.

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NEWS 1

West Ed. Mall. Exhibit celebrating Princess Diana coming to town

An award-winning exhibit that explores the life of Diana, Princess of Wales, is coming to West Edmonton Mall this winter.

From February 9 to June 9, visitors to the 7,000 square foot exhibit in the mall can view nine galleries containing items like Princess Di's wedding gown, family heirlooms, photos, paintings and designer dresses.

Also included is Earl Spencer's tribute to his sister read at her funeral. METRO

Princess Diana's wedding dress will be one of the items on display this winter at West Edmonton Mall. CONTRIBUTED

Carols. Edmonton's singing tree still giving back to the community

Trim up the tree with more than 100 carollers, Edmonton's annual Christmas extravaganza is back.

The Singing Christmas Tree runs this weekend at the Northern Jubilee Auditorium.

"We've got lots of great Edmonton talent that will blow your mind away. It's a great Vegas-style production," said executive producer John Cameron.

The 43-year-old event is once again raising money for Santas Anonymous and the Edmonton Food Bank to help give families in need a little holiday cheer.

Special additions this year include American actor/comedian Christopher Rich, a hip-hop troupe and ballet dancers, as well as local soloists like Michelle Buchynski.

"I love Christmas, I love music and I'm a nurse, so giving back to the community is obviously something I'm very passionate about. To have a show that encompasses all of that is pretty unique," said Buchynski. LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO

City enforces parking ban to tackle snow

Drivers beware. Cars on streets after 7 a.m. will be tagged and towed, says city director

Fine

The fine for parking on a seasonal parking ban route is $50.

RYAN TUMILTY
ryan.tumilty@metronews.ca

The city will impose a parking ban on residential bus routes starting Friday at 7 a.m.

The city's director of Roadway Maintenance Bob Dunford announced the impending ban Thursday afternoon.

The ban will help crews deal with the as much as 15 cm of snow that fell on the city Wednesday afternoon and applies to residential roads that are bus routes.

"If you look out the front window and there is a bus on your street than you are on a banned route," said Dunford.

Dunford said he hopes to see residents comply with the ban, but they will tag and tow any vehicles on the road.

"We ask people to comply, enforcement is not what we want to do, but it is what we will do," he said.

Dunford said he anticipated the parking ban would last 48 hours, after which the city will move on to blading in residential neighbourhoods.

Dunford asked residents not to park their vehicles on the road until the ban is formally lifted, even if a snowplow has come through their neighbourhood.

Starting Friday at 7 a.m., the city is imposing a parking ban on residential bus routes. METRO FILE

Free photo

Help Portrait will snap photos of Edmontonians Saturday

Help Portrait photo CONTRIBUTED

Getting your hair and makeup done and putting on new clothes is an especially exciting experience for someone who never has their picture taken.

"I've photographed people that when you give them the portrait at the end, they cry," said Javier Salazar.

On Saturday, Help Portrait events will take place around the world, including in Edmonton.

The concept is simple: volunteers do hair and makeup, participants are given new clothes if needed and a professional photograph is taken of them and given to them. Saturday's event will be the third time Salazar has organized a Help Portrait event in Edmonton.

"We get all sorts of people," he said. "From homeless to single mothers to families that may just not be able to afford a professional photographer."

The Edmonton events will take place at the Paramount Theatre and Trinity Lutheran Church.

Anyone who can't afford a professional photo is invited to have his or her picture taken.

"I'm a photographer and I've always loved portraiture but I've never really understood the value of a portrait until I actually started doing this event. It just brings it to a whole different level."
ANNALISE KLINGBEIL/METRO

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Misuse. Cusanelli admits to mishandling expenses, including airline tickets

Alberta's tourism minister admits she has not handled her personal expenses well, starting with billing taxpayers to fly her, her mother and daughter to the London Olympics.

"I take my job very seriously. I came here to do good work. I didn't come here to get a free meal. I didn't come here to be able to misuse taxpayer dollars," Christine Cusanelli said Thursday.

Documents show she was ordered in August to pay back $10,600 for improper personal expenses racked up since the election.

"There is not a dime of taxpayers' money that has been used for my personal use."

Cusanelli's expenses included 31 separate items that needed to be repaid. The largest cost was $4,078 for two airline tickets to London during the Olympics.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Expenses

"I take my job very seriously. I came here to do good work."

Alberta Minister of Tourism Christine Cusanelli

Kitchen wish list. Slow food class overwhelmed with donations

Since publishing a blog post late Tuesday night, Cynthia Strawson hasn't stopped looking at her phone.

Strangers have been tweeting, e-mailing, Facebooking and calling Strawson, touched by her words and wanting to donate to her cause.

"I'm completely gob smacked. It was $1,300 in less than 12 hours," she said.

Strawson, a leader of Slow Food Edmonton, has been teaching weekly hands-on cooking classes at a downtown Edmonton women's shelter.

With the last class fast approaching, Strawson began to think about how the nine women have learned the skills to feed themselves and their families but lack kitchen tools of their own.

So, she wrote a blog post featuring a wish list of items needed for a "Kitchen Transition Kit of Empowerment" for each woman, so they have kitchen tools when they move out of the shelter.

After tweeting the blog post, the messages, e-mails and phone calls started to come in.

In just 24 hours, Strawson raised nearly $2,500 and is elated by the donations.

ANNALISE KLINGBEIL/METRO

Edmonton man will be Canada's first deaf priest

A long journey. There are an estimated 127,000 deaf Catholics in Canada

ANNALISE KLINGBEIL
annalise.klingbeil@metronews.ca

A lengthy journey that began in New York City in 1999 will end on Friday for Deacon Matthew Hysell when he is ordained as Canada's first deaf priest.

"It's such a privileged moment. This just does not happen every day," said Archbishop Richard Smith.

Hysell's journey has included living in a house in New York for deaf men interested in becoming priests, a five-year break to study at Berkeley, and a move to Edmonton in 2008.

The Michigan native lost his hearing after contracting meningitis when he was 18 months old.

The 35-year-old is able to speak clearly, read lips and is fluent in sign language.

There will be a few minor adjustments to accommodate for Hysell's hearing loss in his new job.

"When I hear confession I have to receive it face to face. There is the option of face to face or behind the screen, I can only do face to face confession," he said.

Hysell is looking forward to creating awareness within the hearing community and empowering deaf people as Canada's first deaf priest.

"There's going to be a certain level of awareness put on the fact that there are deaf people who need some level of participation in the church's life," he said.

Living with deafness

- **Stages of loss.** There are four levels of deafness: mild, moderate, severe and profound.
- **Coping.** Hysell has profound hearing loss in his right ear. In his left he is severely deaf and wears a high-power hearing aid.

Matthew Hysell is seen in the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton's chapel on Thursday. ANNALISE KLINGBEIL/METRO

New bylaw makes bullies pay

Bullies in a southeast Alberta town better play nice or wind up with steep fines to pay — or possibly even jail time.

A new bylaw passed by Hanna town council last month will now allow RCMP to issue an initial fine of $250 to verbal abusers and subsequent fines of up to $1,000 for more offences. In the most extreme cases, a bully could also face six months in prison or hours of community service.

"The RCMP approached us — they didn't have a mechanism for dealing with bullying short of when it becomes a Criminal Code offence," said Mark Nikota, who serves as mayor of the town of around 2,700.

Other municipalities have already passed their versions of a bully bylaw, including Grande Prairie, to lay $250 fines.

The Hanna bylaw also includes a provision for RCMP to issue a $100 fine to bystanders.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO IN CALGARY

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Reindeer games played year-round

Reindeer can be found all over North America — including on a farm southeast of Leduc. LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO

In reins. On the second of Metro's 12 Days of Christmas, we take you to an Edmonton-area pet reindeer farm

HEATHER MCINTYRE
heather.mcintyre@metronews.ca

There is no Rudolph at the Amber Lane Game Farm southeast of Leduc, but there are eight other reindeer.

Their names are not Dasher, Vixen or Cupid — but they're reindeer all the same.

The farm, also home to 180 elk, became home to the pets nearly 14 years ago.

"In 1999 we got the first ones, and we've been raising them ever since," said Brendan Bulten, who is the technical owner of the reindeer and lives at the farm with his parents. "Something different, something interesting. There's not too many of them around, and it's just kind of fun."

Prior to acquiring the first few in 1999, the family had sheep — which didn't work out so well.

"It was either my elk had to go or his sheep had to go," Herman Bulten, Brendan's father, said with a laugh.

After visiting a farm near Leslieville, Alta. the family was put in a waiting list for animals imported from the north, near Tuktoyaktuk, N.W.T.

Two have been with them since day one, while the youngest is just eight months old.

And while they are on the farm year-round, they draw more attention during the holiday season — for obvious reasons.

"There's a fairly good market in doing the Christmas displays and that kind of stuff with them," said Herman. "We go to a number of different events around the Edmonton area, so that pays for the feed and the keep."

Quoted

"They're the stuff of legends. T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house — and all the rest of it."

Herman Bulten, Alberta Reindeer Association president

In depth

Reindeer roundup

Subspecies. Reindeer look similar to caribou — but smaller — and are the same species, but a different subspecies. Their different physical and behavioural characteristics are due to thousands of years of domestication and selective breeding.

Digestive system. A reindeer's diet is a lot different on a farm than it is on the tundra. They will eat pasture, but they need browns in order to keep their digestive system working properly, as well as proper substitutes for mosses and lichens.

Population. There used to be more than 200 reindeer in Alberta — prior to problems with BSE (mad cow disease) and other diseases. Now, there are about 60 including at the University of Calgary, in zoos, and at four farms throughout the province.

Sundre area. The biggest reindeer farm is in the Sundre, Alta. area, with about 40 of the animals.

Antlers. Reindeer are the only deer species in which both males and females grow antlers. Even calves grow antlers in their first year.

*INFORMATION COURTESY HERMAN BULTEN, PRESIDENT OF THE ALBERTA REINDEER ASSOCIATION, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS REINDEER RESEARCH PROGRAM.

The Amber Lane Game Farm is home to a total of eight reindeer. LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO

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5 gifts for the office shindig

You may not know your boss or coworkers as well as you know your husband, wife, mother or best friend. Gift exchanges at work can leave people wondering what to buy. With a $15 to $20 limit, here are five ideas:

COMPILED BY HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO
heather.mcintyre@metronews.ca

1

CONTRIBUTED

Treats

Who doesn't like cookies? Roca? Brownies? Fruit cake? These are things that disappear off the counter in the office kitchen when someone brings them in, therefore no matter which colleague you are getting a gift for, they will enjoy whatever you bake, buy or throw together. Of course, take note of allergies in the office.

2

CONTRIBUTED

Gift cards

It may seem unimaginative, but gift cards are an awesome gift for your office pals. Whether for movies, books, malls, restaurants, spas, grocery stores or gas bars, people appreciate them. The best part about gift cards, is your coworker can technically get what they want for Christmas – because really, you have no idea what that is.

3

HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

Coffee

Or tea, hot chocolate, etc., etc., etc. Perhaps buy different flavours of all and combine them, with a mug or travel mug, in a basket. Warm drinks are a holiday specialty, and those you work with might enjoy a holiday blend or egg nog flavoured drink instead of whatever kind of roast is in the cupboard. If appropriate, add Bailey's.

4

CONTRIBUTED

Office gadgets

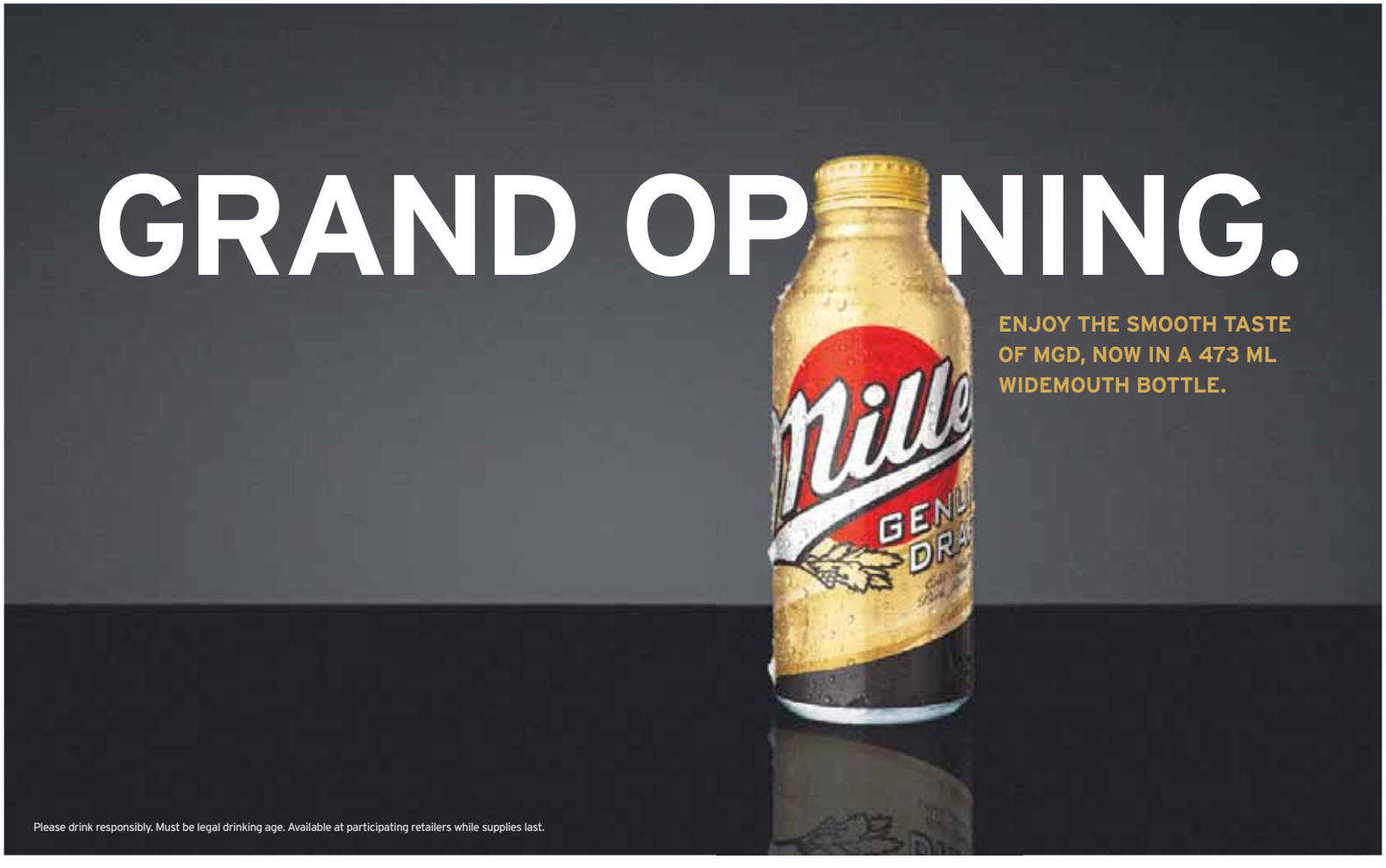
It may seem boring to get someone something work-related for Christmas, but it is a colleague purchasing for a colleague. Therefore, if the person you are being Santa for is short something for their desk — calendar, clock, portfolio, engraved pen, etc — then you will surely help them start off the New Year right.

5

CONTRIBUTED

Greenery

Whether a plant that will bloom come spring, bamboo or cactus, there are ways to personalize a gift that will keep on giving — as long as it keeps on growing. Placing plants in a clear container, with marbles or sand in and around them provide a nice addition to anyone's desk at work, or even their kitchen or living room at home.



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United States mulls plan to release mutant mosquitoes

Florida Keys. Modified insects would kill off their brethren and help prevent outbreaks of dengue fever

Mosquito-control officials in the Florida Keys are waiting for the U.S. government to sign off on an experiment that would release hundreds of thousands of genetically modified mosquitoes to reduce the risk of dengue fever in the tourist town of Key West.

If approved by the Food and Drug Administration, it would be the first such experiment in the U.S. Some Key West residents worry, though, that not enough research has been done to determine the risks that releasing genetically modified mosquitoes might pose to the Keys' fragile ecosystem.

Officials are targeting the Aedes aegypti mosquitoes because they can spread dengue fever, a disease health officials thought had been eradicated in the U.S. until 93 cases originated in the Keys in 2009 and 2010.

A squashed Aedes aegypti mosquito in Key Largo, Fla. WILFREDO LEE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The trial planned by mosquito-control officials and the British company Oxitec would release non-biting male mosquitoes that have been genetically modified to pass along a birth defect that kills their progeny before reaching maturity. The idea is that they will mate with wild females and their offspring will die before reproducing. After a few generations, Key West's Aedes aegypti population would die off, reducing the dengue fever risk without using pesticides and at a relatively low cost, the proponents say. There is no vaccine for dengue fever.

The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District website says the modified genes will disappear from the environment after the mosquitoes carrying it die, resulting in no permanent change to the wild mosquito population. It also says the mosquito species isn't native to the Keys, nor is it an integral food source for other animals.

But Mila de Mier, a concerned real-estate agent, has collected more than 117,700 signatures against the trial on a petition she posted on Change.org.

Dengue fever is a viral disease that inflicts severe flu-like symptoms — the joint pain is so bad it's often called "breakbone fever." It isn't fatal but victims are then susceptible at subsequent exposures to dengue hemorrhagic fever, which can be. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In sickness and in health

Britain's Prince William accompanies his wife, Kate, Duchess of Cambridge, on Thursday as she leaves the King Edward VII Hospital in central London. Kate had been admitted to hospital suffering from severe morning sickness. ANDREW MATTHEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Denied asylum

John McAfee hospitalized

Software company founder John McAfee was hospitalized on Thursday after being denied asylum in Guatemala, and his lawyers said they were making a last-ditch effort to keep him from being flown back to Belize for questioning about the killing of a fellow American expatriate.

A doctor examining him for chest pain said McAfee appeared to be suffering from high stress. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Firearm advisory

Harper rejects lax gun-law plans

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is unhappy with recommendations from a firearms advisory committee that would relax laws.

The committee wants some prohibited weapons, including hand guns and assault rifles, reclassified to make them more easily available and is pushing to make licences good for at least 10 years, rather than five. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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intel inside™ CORE™ i3

Bewitching promises

This photo illustrates a tarot reading. People's belief systems make them vulnerable to the kinds of scams run by false mediums, says James Alcock, a York University professor. ISTOCK

Psychic claims. Visit to 'Angel of Love' leaves Toronto man broke and heavy-hearted

"Rick" first went to see Angel because he wanted to find his ex-girlfriend.

He was responding to an ad by a psychic who calls himself the "Angel of Love."

He returned to Angel, repeatedly, because he wanted his band's music to be heard around the world.

Today, the ex-girlfriend hasn't returned, the band is still unknown and Rick is $11,000 poorer. He doesn't want his real name used because he's deeply embarrassed. He's an intelligent man who holds a good job with the provincial government.

Police say his case is not unique. Last week, Toronto police laid fraud charges against a man claiming to be a witch doctor. On Wednesday, police again cautioned the public about three women claiming to be psychics who preyed on two Chinese victims.

There is a fine line between psychics who break the law and those who don't.

According to Toronto police spokesman Const. Tony Vella, offering a psychic reading for money is legal. It becomes fraud if the psychic knowingly frightens the client into giving him money. There is a law against pretending to practice witchcraft, but it's legal to believe you are offering a real psychic reading.

Rick says Angel told him an evil spirit was causing his problems. For a fee, he claimed to be able to remove the spirit.

Rick met Angel and his female assistant at their office.

"To start off, it's going to be $900. So I went and I took $900 from … my Visa."

He was told to drink a cup of liquid.

"I started barfing right in a cup. I said it's too much. He said it's just the start."

Rick returned to Angel many times since his first visit last spring. He spent another $3,000, before being told to phone their leader, "Juan," in Miami. That man asked Rick for another $11,000. Juan convinced him the "evil spirit in the netherworld" would obey their commands, for a price.

"I took out $8,000 more. It was the most I could get," he said. "He said okay, enough, we'll work on it for you."

Angel didn't show him the spirit like promised, Rick says.

Toronto's Angel of Love has not been convicted of any crime related to his soothsaying business. JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Guilt and shame

"My money's gone though … They're laughing. Probably got a new car."

Rick, who says he was scammed but is too embarrassed to go the police.

Why we fall for scams

You've been very hurt by someone in your past

We're all susceptible to scams when they play on the belief system we've adopted since childhood, according to a psychology professor at York University in Toronto.

"Everybody's vulnerable," said James Alcock, who teaches a class on belief systems. "You could take a person who doesn't believe in curses, won't believe in psychics, is very careful about responding to spam emails and yet they could be suckered by some financial adviser."

Many psychics use tricks of the trade to read people and gain their confidence, said Alcock. He gives a "cold reading" to a student in his class every year, even though he's not psychic.

The combination of vague statements and careful observation works. Every so often, a student will come up to him privately after class to ask if he really is psychic.

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The ex files: Metro reporter asks 'Angel' to find her former flame

JESSICA SMITH
Metro in Toronto

I went to the Angel of Love's office not hoping to find my lost ex-boyfriend, as I told him, but to verify claims the psychic was telling people they were cursed and the way to remove it was to give him money.

I, too, was told that I had been cursed and that it would cost me a lot of money to have my ex-boyfriend back.

We met in the back room of a dingy apartment over a convenience store on Eglinton Avenue West in Toronto. There was no neon sign flashing "psychic," no crystal ball.

Only a pack of tarot cards on the messy desk gave it away as something a little different.

I said I couldn't get in touch with my ex and I was worried about his safety.

Angel spoke in a deep, gravelly foreign language and his assistant translated. After a bit of negotiation, he gave me a "reading" for $40.

"Your luck is not good," said the assistant as Angel read my tarot cards. "On your luck, depends everything. Love and work. Everything. Money, money comes and money goes."

They told me a lot of people are envious of me. I tried to look pleased, to pass off as vain.

"There is a woman, she is the one that has a lot of envy over you," said the assistant. "She is envious of your relationship."

They asked if I've been to a psychic before. I said no, truthfully.

"He can see witchcraft, spells and those things. There is a person who has probably put them to work on you," said the assistant as Angel read my palm.

The witch's curse is blocking my luck, so everything in my life suffers, he said.

The next day I got bad news. My ex-boyfriend is seeing someone.

I exclaimed, "You found him?" but the assistant explained that that's not what they do. They can just "see" he is seeing someone else now.

I tried to look aggrieved.

"We can always bring him back," said the assistant. "To you, for a price."

The assistant explained that there will be three different sessions required and there are different levels of service I can get. The top tier costs $1,500, in three payments of $500.

"They'll bring him back and he'll stay with you forever, he'll love you forever. That's why it's the highest price," he said.

For less money, my ex will return but won't be guaranteed to stay as long — $1,200 for four years, $900 for two.

If I opt for any, they will throw in a cure for the spell that the witch put on me and give me a charm that will keep me safe in the future. I told them I'd think it over.

Reached by phone Thursday, Angel's assistant said they have never had any complaints about what they do and he doesn't feel they are taking advantage of people.

LISTEN TO A RECORDING OF JESSICA'S SESSION AT METRONEWS.CA

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Global perspective

Worries grow over threat of chemical weapons

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird is urging China and Russia to lean on the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad as reports emerge he could unleash chemical weapons on his own people.

The UN Security Council has been powerless to censure Syria because of the objections of veto-wielding Russia and China.

"These reports are deeply disturbing and are absolutely unacceptable," Baird told the House of Commons on Thursday. "Our government has been very clear that the international community will not tolerate the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime on the Syrian people.

"We have called on countries like Russia and China to use whatever leverage they have to prevent this serious crisis from entering a new, disastrous phase."

Canada, the U.S. and several European and Arab countries have repeatedly called for Assad to step down.

Meanwhile, NATO is following through on its plan to place Patriot missiles and troops along Syria's border with Turkey to guard against potential attacks.

The Assad regime denounces this move as psychological warfare and says it won't stop it from defeating the rebel forces it says are terrorists.

"Ultimately Assad and his supporters will be held accountable," Baird said. "We stand with the Syrian people in their hour of need."

Western countries are wary about arming rebels because of fears of extremists in their ranks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A Free Syrian Army fighter breaks a hole in the wall of a resident's home on Wednesday during clashes in Aleppo. NARCISO CONTRERAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Assad's back against the wall as rebels close in

Syrian crisis. President may have no choice but to fight to the death, diplomat says

The battle for Damascus looms closer. As Syrian rebels encircle President Bashar al Assad's stronghold, he will be aware of the fate met by fellow leaders who misruled their people and faced their wrath.

Libya's Moammar Gadhafi dragged out of a drainpipe, sodomized and shot. Hosni Mubarak of Egypt jailed for life.

The opposition under the loose umbrella of the Free Syrian Army is battling Assad's forces in the south and eastern suburbs, and on the road to the airport as his warplanes hit back. As the noose tightens around Damascus, the seat of family rule since Assad's late father, Hafez, seized power 42 years ago, the president faces tough choices about what to do next. Fight or flee?

An important calculation in his decision is the fate of his Alawite community, a minority who practise an offshoot of Shiite Islam and have been instrumental in suppressing the uprising.

They make up 12 per cent of the population but are the backbone of the regime — 80 per cent of the army's officer class are Alawites.

Assad will fight to the death because the rebels, many of whom are Sunni, would show no mercy, said Nikolaos van Dam, a veteran diplomat with 35 years of experience in Syria.

"This is a battle for death or life," he said. "The regime knows if they are toppled they will simply be killed. It could be a long battle in Damascus."

Violence is spiralling out of control. On Wednesday, 140 people died, the U.K.-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported. The government controls only half of Aleppo and several military bases have been overrun by opposition fighters, according to reports by Syrian-based activists.

Speculation is intensifying about how long the regime can hold on. On Monday, Nabil al Araby, head of the Arab League, told Agence France-Presse that the government could fall at "any time."

Exile in Russia, which has backed him, or to another country, with his wife, Asma, and their three children is no guarantee he would not be extradited for war crimes in the future, van Dam said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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BMO survey

More Canadians have RRSPs than this time last year

An increasing number of Canadians surveyed in a BMO study have invested in a registered retirement savings plan this year.

The BMO Financial Group poll found 67 per cent of respondents have an RRSP, compared to 61 per cent at this time last year. Nearly three-quarters of respondents plan to contribute the same amount or more to their RRSP than they did last year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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Dow Jones: 13,074.04 (+39.55)

Q4 earnings reports

Strong results for banks clouded by loan outlook

Shares in TD Bank, CIBC and National Bank of Canada all fell Thursday as worries about the outlook for consumer loans amid record household debt overshadowed earnings reports that met or exceeded expectations.

Despite solid fourth-quarter financial results, National Bank fell 1.4 per to $76.60, CIBC gave back 0.47 per cent to $80.14 and TD was off 1.8 per cent, closing at $81.12.

The performance "reflects what investors see as a challenging environment for the banks," said CIBC World Markets analyst Rob Sedran, who forecast a 2013 growth pullback in the sector to between five per cent and six per cent.

He said the banks are bracing for a decline in consumer loans growth, especially in the cooling housing market, as governments tighten mortgage rules and leveraged consumers become more cautious about borrowing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada Post flunks information-request report card — again

Ottawa. Information commissioner finds postal service is still far from achieving transparency

Canada Post vehicles sit outside a sorting depot in the Ville St-Laurent borough of Montreal in this file photo. Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault has found the postal service has made only a bit of improvement over the past two years in how it processes information requests. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The information watchdog says Canada Post has delivered only marginal improvement on its handling of access-to-information requests.

The post office received an F on its latest report card from Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault after being stamped with red-alert status for its poor performance two years ago.

As reported Wednesday, the CBC got an A for its processing of requests in 2011-12, up from an F for its performance two years ago.

The access law allows people who pay $5 to seek federal files ranging from expense reports and email messages to briefing notes and internal audits.

As an ombudsman for users of the law, Legault has periodically looked at whether key institutions meet their legal obligations of transparency.

In her report card on Canada Post, Legault said although the Crown corporation has taken some steps toward improving its performance, it is still far from achieving optimal compliance with the law.

In a statement Thursday, Canada Post said it was disappointed with the F rating, as it had taken steps to improve performance. It committed to doing even better.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bank of Canada. Low interest rates putting stress on world economy, central bank says

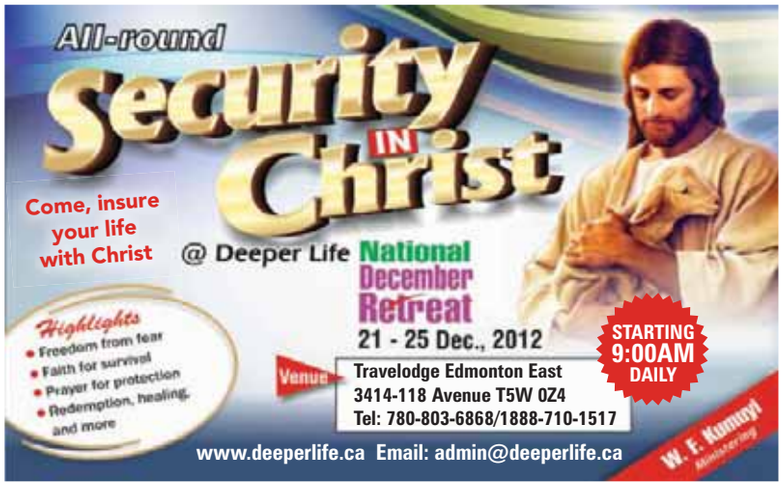
The Bank of Canada is warning that its own low-interest policies and those of central banks around the world are adding another layer of risk to the already stressed global financial system and economy.

The central bank says near-record-level interest rates in place since the 2008-09 recession are taking their toll on insurance companies, pension funds and even increasing the appetite of investors to take risks in search of higher returns.

In Canada, they have been a prime mover to the other major domestic risk — an overheated housing market and high levels of consumer debt as Canadians take advantage of cheap money to buy real estate.

Bank governor Mark Carney has warned about the dangers of low interest rates sporadically in the past, but this time the bank's governing council has thought the concern grave enough to add it to the list of risks facing Canada and the world.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Line of Macs will be made in U.S., Apple CEO says

Apple CEO Tim Cook says the company will move production of one of its existing lines of Mac computers to the United States next year.

Industry watchers said the announcement is both a cunning public-relations move and a harbinger of more manufacturing jobs moving back to the U.S. as wages rise in China.

Cook made the comments in part of an interview aired Thursday morning on Today and posted on the network's website.

"This doesn't mean that Apple will do it ourselves, but we'll be working with people and we'll be investing our money," Cook said in a separate interview with Bloomberg Businessweek.

That suggests the company could be helping its Taiwanese manufacturing partner Foxconn Technology Group to set up a factory in the U.S.

Cook didn't say which line of computers would be produced in the U.S. or where in the country they would be made. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

By the numbers

$100M

Apple CEO Tim Cook told Bloomberg Businessweek that the company will spend $100 million US in 2013 to move production of one of its lines of Mac computers to the U.S. from China.

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Rona looks to boost long-term profits

Home improvement. Troubled company has been under pressure to improve bottom line

Rona is hoping to convince investors of the long-term potential of Canada's largest home-improvement chain by making strategic moves, including the sale of non-core assets, to improve profitability after years of focusing on top-line growth.

"This is really managing the business long-term and creating value long-term," acting CEO Dominique Boies said in an interview Thursday after Rona disclosed the Quebec-based company's strategic plan.

Rona Inc. said it will take until Feb. 21 to evaluate what changes need to be made to unlock the "profit potential of a simplified business model."

The troubled company has been under pressure to improve its bottom line, especially since it rejected a lucrative takeover bid by U.S. rival Lowe's.

Earlier, Boies told a news conference that Rona had in fact offered to buy Lowe's Canada in 2011 to reduce over-capacity in the market.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"If someone wants cash-out tomorrow morning, (the plan) might not please them. But we're not managing the business for the next quarter, we're managing the business for the long run — so that's why those strategic priorities are there." Rona CEO Dominique Boies

A Rona store is shown in Toronto in this July file photo. Canada's largest home-improvement retailer says it's preparing to sell non-core assets and make other strategic moves to improve its profitability. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Supermarkets. Loblaw to spin off real estate, plans public offering mid-2013

Loblaw Companies Ltd. is creating a real-estate investment trust that will be one of the country's largest commercial landlords, an announcement that sent its shares soaring Thursday.

The REIT, which would operate as a subsidiary of Loblaw, would see Canada's biggest supermarket operator contribute real-estate assets with a current market value of more than $7 billion to the venture.

Units of the REIT would then be sold in an initial public offering expected to be completed in mid-2013, subject to regulatory approvals.

"However, it is our intention to retain a significant majority interest in the REIT — over 80 per cent," Loblaw chief financial officer Sarah Davis told a conference call with analysts.

Loblaw isn't the first such chain to make the move.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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FRACAS ENSUES AFTER F-BOMB DROPPED IN THE HOUSE

THE LIST
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

TGIF, when you can read The Metro List and relive the parade of wonders that marks yet another zany week in this crazy world we live in.

1 **We are amused.** The next generation of British royals is gestating and poor Kate ends up in the hospital suffering from a right royal bout of morning sickness. After enduring a round-the-clock siege from publicity hounds and pranksters, she emerges looking remarkably well, considering, proving once again that there will always be an England. There might even be twins.

2 **Nothing amusing here.** The Harper government House leader nearly comes to blows with his NDP counterpart after crossing the floor in a pugnacious manner to deliver a speech composed primarily of the F word. Who elected these clowns? Oh, right.

3 **Attack of the killer PM.** Why can't we elect somebody cool like Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard who takes time out of her busy schedule to reassure her people that even though the world will end on Dec. 21 (as allegedly predicted by the Mayan calendar), she will continue to stand by them to the bitter end, which will be caused by: "flesh eating zombies, demonic hell beasts or from the total triumph of K-Pop." I think she's kidding, but the Tasmanian devil certainly fits the description of a demonic hell beast.

4 **Speaking of the end of the world.** The poor little misunderstood pop star Justin Bieber is snubbed by the Grammy nominators again in favour of dumb old guys like Jack White, the Black Keys, and Maroon 5. As if!

5 **Riot like an Egyptian.** The Muslim Brotherhood, now in power as the Arab Spring turns to winter, passes a constitution that prohibits discrimination against anyone, but removes the phrase: "on the basis of sex, origin, religion and creed." Uh-oh. The Brotherhood's power grab has blown the lid off the uneasy calm on the streets of Cairo, where spring seems a long, long time ago.

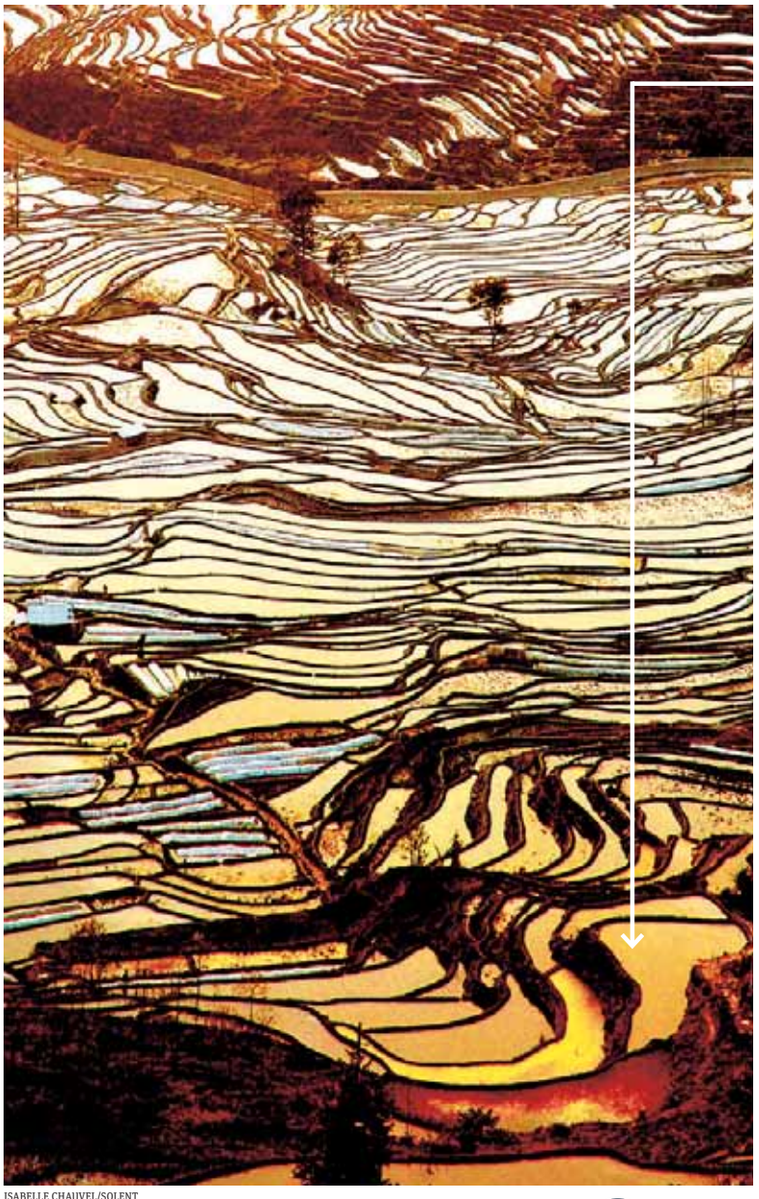
6 **Lest we forget.** This week marks the 23rd anniversary of the cold-blooded murder of 14 women in Montreal by a crazed misogynist. It remains as horrifying as it did then. And yes, every man owns a piece of it.

7 **What would YOU have done?** A bus driver in Vienna, Austria, finds a sack stuffed with money, (390,000 euros to be precise, worth more than half a million Canadian dollars) and turns it in! It is traced to an elderly lady who left it behind on the bus. For being the world's most painfully honest man, the driver receives a small cash award and, as it's the end of his shift, gets to take the rest of the day off.

Follow The Metro List on Twitter @TheMetroList

Peter Van Loan, the government's House leader, set off a dust-up when he stormed across the floor of the House of Commons to confront his NDP counterpart, Nathan Cullen, on Wednesday. SCREEN GRAB/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The beauty of making rice



ISABELLE CHAUVEL/SOLENT

Landscape photography

Shining spectacle found in rice fields

At first glance, it looks like a stained-glass window, but a wide gaze reveals something more grand and spectacular.

Reflective pools of water at one of the world's largest rice terraces offer stunning views, especially from 1,800 metres up in the mountains. Isabelle Chauvel took the photos in Yuanyang in China's Yunnan Province. METRO

Natural beauty

Man, nature create visual wonder

Chauvel spent from sunrise to sunset taking photos of the handcrafted rice terraces.

"At each time of the day, the colours reflected in the water were different — from bright orange, off-white, earthy brown and verdant green," she told Metro. "It was a true spectacle of what nature has to offer, and the amazing creation mankind has made." METRO

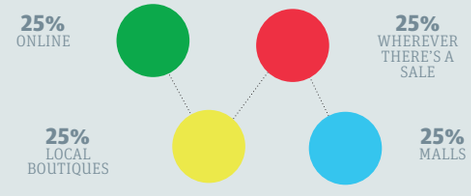
Yuanyang terraces

- Formed by the Hani people more than 1,000 years ago, the fields are still used today for irrigation and farming.
- Fields are irrigated with water from the forest. Water evaporates from fields into clouds — their rain is collected and trapped by mountain forests. In turn, spring water returns to fields.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Where do you do the bulk of your shopping?



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@social_moi:
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@carpentercalen:
Shout out to the snowplow drivers of #Yeg, despite all the bitching...you guys do an awsome job..grab à shovel if you think otherwise...

@froggyakajasmin:
You were really meant to be an Edmontonian when you see snow in the forecast and smile in anticipation & -22 doesn't faze you at all #yeg

@liamcrotty:
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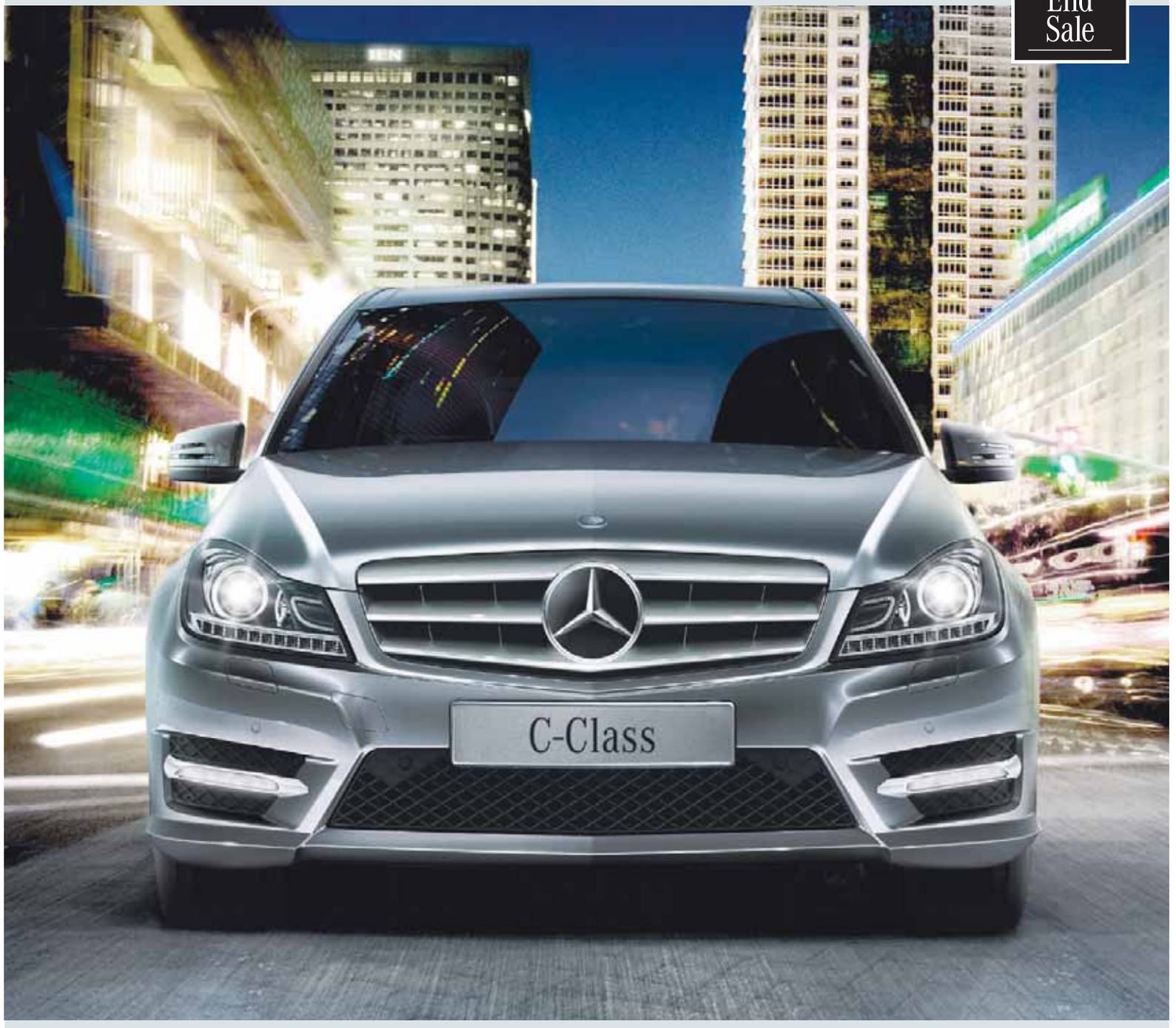

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2 SCENE

Even Gerard Butler's trademark rakish smile can't save Playing For Keeps from crashing. HANDOUT

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

Playing for weeps

Laughless. The Reel Guys agree — Gerard Butler's latest attempt at a rom com has upset the Movie Godz

Richard: Mark, I tried hard to pin point exactly the thing that bugged me about Playing for Keeps. I thought long and hard and have come to realize that we don't have enough space here for me to fully explain why this doesn't work, but let's start with the idea that the women are simply treated as sexed-up plot points and move on from there. What did you think?

Mark: Bad enough that the women are treated as sexed-up plot points; unforgivable that they're all just dropped halfway through the movie. For a while, I thought I was watching a classic sexist Tony Curtis movie. Troglodyte, perhaps, but at least it was a bit of fun. Then the film lost its guts and became the story of a man who — sob — just wants to be reunited — sob — with his family. Yeccch!

RC: Yeah. The first half hour is, maybe not exactly promising, but on par for this kind of movie. Then it takes a turn. He has unresolved feelings for his ex-wife and the movie has unresolved plot points falling from the sky like the tears of the Movie Godz who weep when movies this bad get released. Butler's trademarked eye glint and rakish smile are not enough to save this, and someone please tell Uma Thurman to saddle up and work with Quentin Tarantino again.

MB: Speaking of Uma, how much Botox and Restylane is there in the greater Los Angeles area? Because she's left very little for the rest of us. And Zeta-Jones' vamping made me feel sorry for Butler — he probably had to endure take after take of her bad Anne Bancroft impression. Only Judy Greer gets to walk away with her dignity intact — but she always does, doesn't she? And the running gag with the East Indian landlord was embarrassing if not borderline racist. C'mon, Richard, give me something to like about this one!

RC: How about this? Katherine Heigl's not in it and it's not longer. At 106 minutes, it tests the limits of endurance. At 107 minutes or more we might have been able to press charges for cruelty. Judy Greer, however, is great and I'm going to have to ask you to be careful what you say about my Uma in future.

MB: I apologize, Richard. I love her too. It's just that I love her even more when her face can move about.

Synopsis

Gerard Butler plays George Dwyer, former soccer superstar, now sidelined by injuries. Broke and reduced to selling his own memorabilia to make ends meet, he moves to Virginia to be closer to his ex-wife (Jessica Biel) and their son Lewis (Noah Lomax). When the charming Scot begins coaches his son's soccer team all the soccer moms (Judy Greer, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Uma Thurman) throw themselves at him, but he has eyes for only one woman — his ex-wife.

- Richard: ●○○○○
- Mark: ●○○○○

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The holidays give us lots of time for movies

Preview. Metro looks at some of the upcoming flicks hitting theatres near you

UPCOMING COMEDIES

All that holiday family time will leave most of us in need of a few good laughs.

The Guilt Trip
Dec. 19 — This road trip movie starring Seth Rogen and Barbra Streisand aims to plumb the treasure trove of jokes to be made about a mother and son going on a road trip across the country.

This is 40
Dec. 21 — As the "sort of sequel" to 2007's Knocked Up, this Judd Apatow film follows committed couple Debbie and Pete (Leslie Mann and Paul Rudd) as they struggle with aging and each other.

Quartet
Jan. 11 (limited) — Dustin Hoffman directs this comedy about a British retirement home for opera singers and the longtime resident who reunites with a lost love. Pretty much, it's Best Exotic Marigold Quartet.

A Haunted House
Jan. 11 — Marlon Wayans, Cedric the Entertainer and Nick Swardson finally give Paranormal Activity and all those exorcist movies the send-up they deserve.

Movie 43
Jan. 25 — Like those monster ensemble rom coms such as Valentine's Day and New Year's Eve, this comedy packs in a load of stars but promises to be a least a little bit more enjoyable than the aforementioned cheesefests.

SCI-FI, HORROR, ACTION

Despite being the season for high-concept movies, the horror and action genres have plenty to offer this winter.

Texas Chainsaw 3D
Jan. 4 — It's yet another remake of the classic horror flick, but this time the story follows a young woman who journeys to Texas to gather her inheritance, which happens to be in the home of Leatherface.

Mama
Jan. 18 — Annabel and Lucas, a young couple, must raise his two young nieces after being left to fend for themselves by their late parents. They soon discover the girls' dark past, which includes a relentless spirit called Mama.

The Last Exorcism 2: The Beginning of the End
March 1 — If you can get past the film's misleading predecessor, the sequel picks up somewhere down the track as Nell Sweetzer attempts to move on from the past, but is confronted by the sinister force that previously possessed her.

Gangster Squad
Jan. 11 — If Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone aren't enough to get you interested, this film looks set to be one of the best winter releases. The action flick follows the LAPD's struggle with the East Coast Mafia during the '40s and '50s.

Parker
Jan. 25 — Jason Statham steps back into his signature role as an action hero, but this time he plays a thief who forms an alliance with an unlikely friend (Jennifer Lopez) to get revenge on his gang.

Hansel and Gretel Witch Hunters
Jan. 25 — The name pretty much sums it up. The flick is a modern take on the classic fairy tale in which we see Hansel and Gretel on a pursuit for vengeance against the witches who tortured them as children.

Jack Reacher
Dec. 21 — In this adaptation of the Lee Child crime series, Tom Cruise plays an ex-military homicide investigator who steps in to solve a case in which a trained sniper is accused of killing five random innocents.

FILMS LIKELY TO SCORE A GOLDEN STATUETTE

1. Killing Them Softly
Friday — Brad Pitt stars in this dark underworld thriller about a pair of small-time crooks that rob a mobster card game. Soon an enforcer (Pitt) is sent in to make sure that debts are properly paid.

2. Hyde Park on Hudson
Friday (limited) — Bill Murray, Laura Linney and Olivia Williams star in this depiction of the affair between FDR and his distant cousin, Margaret Stuckley, during the landmark visit of the first reigning British royals on American soil.

3. Amour
Dec. 19 (limited) — The winner of the 2012 Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival has yet to leave anything but a stirring impression on those who have seen it. Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke's depiction of an elderly couple facing their mortality guarantees a beautifully heart-rending experience.

4. Zero Dark Thirty
Dec. 19 (limited) — After her Oscar win for 2008's The Hurt Locker, Kathryn Bigelow presents another military drama in the Middle East, this time following the hunt and execution of Osama Bin Laden.

5. The Impossible
Dec. 21 (limited) — Naomi Watts and Ewan McGregor star in the true story of one family's struggle to survive the tsunami that struck the coast of Thailand in 2004.

This is 40, starring Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann. HANDOUT

6. Not Fade Away
Dec. 21 (limited) — The mastermind behind The Sopranos, David Chase, writes and directs this nostalgic drama about a fledgling rock band trying to make it big in 1960s New Jersey. And yes, James Gandolfini (formerly known as Tony Soprano) does make an appearance.

7. On the Road
Jan. 18 (limited) — This long-awaited adaptation of Jack Kerouac's beloved beatnik novel stars Garrett Hedlund, Kirsten Dunst and of course a topless-at-one-point Kristen Stewart as a bunch of roustabout rebels in the late '50s, trying to discover what it means to be free.

8. Django Unchained
Dec. 25 — Vigilante justice is the cornerstone of any Quentin Tarantino film, and his 2012 offering promises to deliver the obligatory amount of gratuitous bloodshed. Jamie Foxx plays a freed slave who is assisted in revenge by his mentor, played by Christoph Waltz.

9. Les Miserables
Dec. 25 — Some Oscar wins are practically in the hands of director Tom Hooper already for his adaptation of the Broadway musical, originally penned as a novel by Victor Hugo. By recording the live singing performances of stars Russell Crowe, Hugh Jackman, Anne Hathaway and others, the film stands to break new ground for musical adaptations that eschew the cheese factor.

10. Promised Land
Jan. 4 — Matt Damon, Frances McDormand, John Krasinski and Rosemarie DeWitt star in this film about a natural gas company salesman who experiences a conflict of interest when arriving in a small town that is the next target for prospecting.

11. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey
Dec. 14 — The first installment of Peter Jackson's latest Tolkien trilogy is sure to pick up at least a few technical awards for its daring method of shooting film at twice the speed of regular film (48 frames per second, as opposed to the traditional 24). METRO

Drama

Hitchcock

Director. Sacha Gervasi

Stars. Anthony Hopkins, Helen Mirren, Scarlett Johansson

Somewhere between Toby Jones' portrayal in HBO's dour The Girl and Anthony Hopkins' turn in Hitchcock are the real facts. Certainly much of Hitchcock — loosely based on Stephen Rebello's book The Making of Psycho — is a fairy tale, whitewashing the grimmer side of the filmmaking process in favour of a lighthearted peek at the love affair between Hitch and his wife/partner Alma (Helen Mirren) during the making of his notorious work. Hopkins and Mirren are a joy to watch. But compared to the darker The Girl, Hitchcock feels trite. **CHRIS ALEXANDER**

Drama/Sci-Fi

Holy Motors

Director. Leos Carax

Stars. Denis Lavant, Edith Scob, Eva Mendes

As a professional chameleon tooling around Paris in a white stretch limousine, Denis Lavant gives the performance of the year — or actually, eleven of them. Lavant's shape-shifting brilliance (he's an old lady, a monster, a hitman and a motion-capture-suit-clad-martial-artist) makes him a walking analog special effect, and he holds this wild, unruly, impressively ambitious movie together. A must-see.
ADAM NAYMAN

Don't miss Last Chance

With Human Rights Day on December 10, the National Film Board of Canada is offering a free screening on their website of Last Chance, a documentary by Paul Émile d'Entremont featuring five asylum-seekers from Jamaica, Colombia, Lebanon, Egypt and Nicaragua who have fled homophobic violence. Check out NFB.ca, or metronews.ca/scene to see the trailer. CHARLES GAGNON

The first eco-horror movie

Movies. Oscar winner Barry Levinson has made the Paranormal Activity of environmental movies. Get ready to be scared by The Bay

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

On July 4, 2009, tiny monsters popped out of the Chesapeake Bay near Washington D.C. and horrifically killed innocent people, leaving them battered, bloodied and infected. True story? No, but new movie The Bay pretends it is. The flick is filmed in found footage style à la The Blair Witch Project and Paranormal Activity. Hidden inside is an environmental message: Our waters are toxic. Oscar-winner Barry Levinson created the film, leading us to ask:

A found footage movie seems a strange choice for an Oscar winner. What made you want to do it?
Well, I would not have thought to do a movie like this. It was an evolution. I was approached by the people in Maryland to do a documentary about the Chesapeake Bay because it's 40 per cent dead. I looked into it, I found out that PBS had done a documentary that was terrific, but ultimately nobody really responded or cared or thought that we ought to do something about this largest estuary in the U.S. that's 40 per cent dead, filled with a toxic soup. Then a couple of weeks later I thought, maybe what you need to do is if you took all the facts and you pulled it into a story ... and you create characters, maybe the facts will become more frightening to us.

Is that the movie equivalent of sneaking medication into someone's dessert?
The information becomes vital to the storytelling. It becomes one and the same; it's connective that way. And so, I think it adds to the experience because it adds the credibility.

"I'll never swim in the bay again." Movie still of an infested patient. LIONSGATE

What are some of the conditions in the movie that come from those facts?
Well, take the drinking water. We know the filtration systems in the United States are basically D-rated. That's what they say, it met the standards. It's substandard, but it met the standards. We know our water quality is a D-minus. And we go, "Well that's good enough."

What about the monsters in the film?
They're really isopods and they do exist. They're not in the Chesapeake Bay, but they're in the Atlantic. In the scene where the oceanographer holds one up to the camera and says, "This is sea lice," that's not a CGI shot. That's a fish that has sea lice on it in South Carolina where we were filming. We've got a lot of stuff that's got a reality base to it that makes it even scarier.

Are there any efforts now to correct the situation in the Chesapeake Bay?
They say there are efforts to fix it. You could correct the damage if you put a real effort forward. Now they're doing some work, so I won't say they're not doing anything. But they're not doing what you have to do. You've got to be in an emergency mode. And I mean, it's all doable.
You can correct it. It's just, "Do you have the will to want to do it or not?"

The Bay is on iTunes now.
www.thebay-movie.com

The money behind Green Cinema

Hollywood is filled with activists behind a good cause, especially the environment. But the history of Green Cinema has had a spotty track record.

It often works best when the environmental message is inherent to the story, especially if the movie is based on actual events, like Erin Brockovich or last year's Big Miracle, about one Alaska town's efforts to free a family of whales. And a fictional movie can take its cues from real life, as in Richard Linklater's Fast Food Nation, about the horrors of McDonald's.

Hollywood triumphs when it mixes a eco message into mainstream entertainment, like James Cameron's Avatar (biggest movie ever), disaster flick The Day After Tomorrow (a smash) or Pixar's adorable Wall-E (made $520 million worldwide). This year, director Barry Levinson tries using a gore-filled horror movie, The Bay. Made for a small sum, it'll probably make back its money.

Julia Roberts as Erin. UNIVERSAL

There's often no substitute for the truth, and eco-themed documentaries are a long and proud tradition. Famous ones include Al Gore's Oscar-winning An Inconvenient Truth and Waste Land, a Brazilian movie on making art from Earth's largest landfill.

Meanwhile, Gus Van Sant's Promised Land on controversial hydraulic drilling, or fracking, is out next month and in time for Oscar consideration. But will it be a hit or a flop? **NED EHRBAR**

Green heroes and zeroes

Hero

Gisele Bundchen

The Brazilian model was named the Best Green International Celebrity at last year's Green Awards, and since 2009 is UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador.

Hero

Daryl Hannah

The U.S. actress-activist has been arrested while at protests for eco groups. A vegan and the driver of a biodiesel car, Hannah records video blogs on sustainability.

Hero

Mark Ruffalo

Green on screen (as Hulk in The Avengers), green in life, the U.S. actor stopped by Metro's New York office for Earth Day last year to guest-edit the newspaper.

Zero

Mariah Carey

Airmiles addict diva is famous for an overindulgence of her private jet. She's even been known to fly a personal trainer into New York just for a workout.

Zero

John Travolta

His passion for aviation leaves a hefty carbon footprint. One group estimated that the actor's hobby generates an average of 800 tons of carbon emissions a year.

Zero

Toby Keith

The U.S. country music star warrants a mention for no other reason than releasing the song Red Solo Cup, which celebrates the popular plastic drinking vessel.
NED EHRBAR

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Richard Armitage's unexpected journey to becoming a dwarf

The Hobbit. Actor credits Tolkien with pushing his imagination and leading him to acting

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

In The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, British actor Richard Armitage plays Thorin Oakenshield, exiled dwarf king. He's a newcomer to the Peter Jackson vision of Middle Earth — which began with the three Lord of the Rings films, and continues with a new Hobbit trilogy — but no stranger to the world of author J.R.R. Tolkien.

"I am one of those people who have loved the book," he says. "I remember being read The Hobbit by a teacher in primary school who did amazing voices, God bless her. I picked up the book myself and started reading it, which was kind of rare because normally I would have to be forced to read."

He missed the chance to audition for the first set of films, but when The Hobbit came around he jumped at the chance.

"I had no idea how I would fit into that story because the idea of playing a dwarf just wasn't on my radar. I'm six foot three and a half, so why on earth would I play a dwarf?"

It wasn't the first time he was excited to bring the fantasy of Middle Earth to life.

"I was in a stage production of The Hobbit when I was 13," he says, "which I leapt at. It's weird how you have that reaction when someone says they're doing a stage production, at 13 to go, 'I've read that book. I love it. Let me be in it.' I had the same feeling when they were making this movie."

He says thoughts of that long ago play are "filled with strange memories."

"I remember wearing a knitted smock, which had been sprayed silver to look like chain mail but it was made of wool. I was an elf. I was pretty tall for 13 years old. Gollum was made of paper and they didn't have enough money for a dragon, so it was a red light, a puff of smoke and a man off stage with a microphone. I remember running around in circles eating grapes because we were doing a scene in the forest where the Elves are tempting the dwarves to come to their feast."

He draws a straight line between his early love of Tolkien and his current profession.

"My imagination was totally stimulated by Tolkien's world and I think once you've had your imagination stimulated in that way, every book you ever read you dramatize in your head. You hear character's voices and visualize that world."

Richard Armitage plays Thorin Oakenshield, exiled dwarf king, in The Hobbit. HANDOUT

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10200 102nd Ave., 780-421-7020

Flight (18A) Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 9:20
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 10
Killing Them Softly (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 4-7-9:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 4-9:45 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4-9:50
Life of Pi (PG) Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:30 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3:30 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12:30 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3:30
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 3:30-6:40-10 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 6:45-10 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 3:30-6:40-10 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 6:45-10
Lincoln (PG) Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12-3:20-6:45-10:05 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3:10-6:30-9:55 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12-3:20-6:45-10:05 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3:10-6:30-9:55
Red Dawn (PG) Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:40-3:15-6:20 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3:45-6:15 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12:40-3:15-6:20 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 3:45-6:15
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:45 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3:15-6:10-9:10 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:45 Bargain Matinee, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3:15-6:10-9:10
Skyfall (14A) Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:10-3:40-7-10:15 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3-6:25-9:40 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12:10-3:40-7-10:15 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3-6:25-9:40
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Fri-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Mon 3:50-6:55-9:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Tue 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Wed 3:50-6:55-9:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Thu 4:10-6:55-9:50
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:20 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 3:20 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 12:20 Bargain Matinee, Digital Presentation, DTS Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3:20
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri-Sun 3:10-6:30-9:30 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Mon 6:35-9:25 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Tue 3:10-6:30-9:30 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Wed-Thu 6:35-9:25

Clareview 10 Cinemas
4211 139th Ave., 780-472-7600

Flight (18A) Digital Presentation Fri 8:10 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:30-4:30-8:10 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 4:35-7:35
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10
Killing Them Softly (14A) Digital Presentation Fri 6:45-9:40 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:10-4:20-6:45-9:40 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 4:50-7:40
Life of Pi (PG) Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri 6:30-9:20 Sat-Sun 3:45-6:30-9:20 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:40
Paranormal Activity 4 (14A) Digital Presentation Fri-Sun 9:15 Digital Presentation Mon-Wed 8
Pitch Perfect (PG) Digital Presentation Fri 6:40 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:20-4-6:40 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 5:05
Playing for Keeps (PG) Digital Presentation Fri 7-9:35 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:35-4:20-7-9:35 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 5:10-7:50
Red Dawn (PG) Digital Presentation Fri 7:10-9:30 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:50-4:15-7:10-9:30 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 5-8
Rise of the Guardians (G) Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:40
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 6:50-9:15 Sat-Sun 4:10-6:50-9:15 Mon-Thu 5:15-7:55
Skyfall (14A) Digital Presentation Fri 6:35-9:10 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:10-3:30-6:35-9:10 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 4:30-7:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Digital Presentation Fri 6:45-9:30 Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:20-4-6:45-9:30 Digital Presentation Mon-Thu 4:45-7:30
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Digital Presentation Sat-Sun 1:15
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri 6:30-9 Sat-Sun 3:50-6:30-9 Mon-Thu 5:10-7:45

Metro Cinema at the Garneau
8712 109 St., 780-425-9212, metrocinema.org

Highway Gospel (14A) Fri 7 Sat 4 Sun 2-7 Mon 9:15
Holy Motors (STC) Fri 9 Sat 7 Sun 9 Mon 7 Wed 9:15
The Polar Express (G) Sat 2
The Room (STC) Fri 11:15
Spaceballs (STC) Wed 7
Who Cares About Kelsey? (STC) Sun 4
Movies 12
5074 130 Ave., 780-472-9779
24/7 in Love (PG) Fri-Sun 1:25-4:15-7:05-9:50 Mon 4:15-7:05-9:50 Tue 1:25-4:15-7:05-9:50 Wed-Thu 4:15-7:05-9:50
Dredd 3D (18A) Fri-Sun 1:45-4:10-7:30-9:35 Mon 4:10-7:30-9:35 Tue 1:45-4:10-7:30-9:35 Wed-Thu 4:10-7:30-9:35

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Here Comes the Boom (PG) Fri-Sun 1:35-4:05-6:50-9:20 Mon 4:05-6:50-9:20 Tue 1:35-4:05-6:50-9:20 Wed-Thu 4:05-6:50-9:20
Hotel Transylvania (PG) Fri-Sun 1:05 Tue 1:05
Hotel Transylvania 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 3:40-6:55-9:15
Ice Age: Continental Drift (G) Fri-Sun 1:40 Tue 1:40
Ice Age: Continental Drift 3D (G) Fri-Thu 4:20-7:10-9:25
Jab Tak Hai Jaan (PG) Fri-Sun 1-4:30-8 Mon 4:30-8 Tue 1-4:30-8 Wed-Thu 4:30-8
Khiladi 786 (STC) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:45-6:40-9:40 Mon 3:45-6:40-9:40 Tue 12:50-3:45-6:40-9:40 Wed-Thu 3:45-6:40-9:40
The Man With the Iron Fists (18A) Fri-Sun 1:50-4:30-7:20-10 Mon 4:30-7:20-10 Tue 1:50-4:30-7:20-10 Wed-Thu 4:30-7:20-10
The Master (14A) Fri-Sun 12:55-3:50-6:35-9:35 Mon 3:50-6:35-9:35 Tue 12:55-3:50-6:35-9:35 Wed-Thu 3:50-6:35-9:35
Seven Psychopaths (18A) Fri-Sun 1:15-4-7-9:30 Mon 4-7-9:30 Tue 1:15-4-7-9:30 Wed-Thu 4-7-9:30
Sinister (14A) Fri-Sun 1:20-4:25-7:15-9:55 Mon 4:25-7:15-9:55 Tue 1:20-4:25-7:15-9:55 Wed-Thu 4:25-7:15-9:55
Talaash (14A) Fri-Sun 1:10-3:55-6:45-9:45 Mon 3:55-6:45-9:45 Tue 1:10-3:55-6:45-9:45 Wed-Thu 3:55-6:45-9:45

North Edmonton Cinemas
14231 137th Ave., 780-732-2236

Argo (14A) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:20-6:40-9:20
A Christmas Story (STC) Sat 11
Flight (18A) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:55-7:10-10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) No Passes Thu 10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10 No Passes Thu 10:01
Killing Them Softly (14A) Fri 12:50-3:10-6-8:10-10:35 Sat 1-3:20-6-8:10-10:35 Sun 12:50-3:10-6-8:10-10:35 Mon-Wed 12:50-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:35 Thu 12:50-3:10-5:30-8-10:45
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri-Wed 1-4-7:05-10 Thu 10:35 Thu 1-4-7:05
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sun 12-3:15-6:30-9:45 Mon-Tue 1-4:15-7:30 Wed 4:15-7:30 Thu 1-4:15-7:30 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
The Metropolitan Opera: Un Ballo in Maschera Live (STC) Sat 10:55
Miracle on 34th Street (STC) Sun 12:45 Wed 7
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri-Tue 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:20 Wed 1-5:15-7:45-10:20 Thu 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:20
Red Dawn (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:30-8:20-10:40 Mon-Wed 2-4:30-8:15-10:35 Thu 2-4:30-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri 12:10-2:30-5:50 Sat-Sun 12:10-1:10-2:30-5:50 Mon-Thu 1:45
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 5-7:40-10:05 Sat 11-5-7:40-10:05 Sun 5-7:40-10:05 Mon-Wed 4:10-6:30-8:50 Thu 4:10-6:30-8:40
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Thu 7:30
Skyfall (14A) Fri-Tue 1:30-3-4:40-8-9 Wed 1:30-3-4:40-8-9:10 Thu 1:15-3-4:30-7:40-9 Fri-Wed 12:30-3:45-7-10:10 Thu 12:25-3:30-6:45
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 12:20-1:20-2:20-4:10-5:10-6:10-6:50-7:50-9:30-10:30 Sat-Sun 12:20-2:30-4:10-5:10-6:10-6:50-7:50-9:30-10:30 Mon-Tue 12:20-1:20-2:20-4:10-5-6:10-6:50-7:50-9:30-10:30 Wed 12:20-1:20-2:20-4:10-5-6:50-7:50-9:30-10:30 Thu 12:20-1:20-2:20-4:10-5-6:10-6:50-7:50-10:30
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri 1:10 Sat 11:10-1:20 Sun 1:20 Mon-Thu 1:10
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri-Thu 3:50-6:45-9:15
Princess I & II
10337 Whyte Ave., 780-433-0728
Hitchcock (PG) Fri 7-9:10 Sat-Sun 2-7-9:10 Mon-Thu 7-9:10
The Sessions (18A) Fri 6:50 Sat-Sun 1-6:50 Mon-Thu 6:50
Stories We Tell (PG) Fri 9 Sat-Sun 3-9 Mon-Thu 9

Scotiabank Theatre West Mall
8882 170th St., 780-444-2400

Argo (14A) Fri-Thu 1:20-7:10
Flight (18A) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:45-6:55-10:10
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey — An IMAX 3D Experience (14A) No Passes Thu 10
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10 No Passes Thu 10:15
Killing Them Softly (14A) Fri-Sun 12:45-3:15-5:45-8:15-10:50 Mon-Thu 12:45-3:15-5:45-8:15-10:35
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri-Wed 1:10-4:15-7:15-10:20 Thu 12:30-4:15-7:15-10:20
The Metropolitan Opera: Un Ballo in Maschera Live (STC) Sat 10:55
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri-Sun 12-2:30-5:20-8-10:40 Mon-Tue 1:50-4:50-8-10:40 Wed 4:50-8-10:40 Thu 1:50-4:50-8-10:40 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Red Dawn (PG) Fri-Wed 12:40-3:20-5:50-8:10-10:30 Thu 12:40-3:20-5:50-8:10
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Sun 12-2:20 Mon-Tue 1:15 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1 Thu 12:30
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:50-7:20-9:45 Mon-Wed 3:50-6:45-9:20 Thu 2:55-5:10-7:30
Skyfall (14A) Fri 2:10-5:30-9 Sat 5:30-9 Sun-Tue 2:10-5:30-9 Wed 2:10-9:30 Thu 2:10-5:30-9-10:45 Fri-Wed 12:50-4:10-7:30-10:45 Thu 1:30-6:30
Skyfall: The IMAX Experience (14A) Fri-Sun 12:20-3:40-7-10:15 Mon-Wed 12:30-3:40-7-10:15 Thu 12:30-3:40-7
Taken 2 (14A) Fri-Thu 4:30-10
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 1-2-4-5-6:50-7:50-9:50-10:45 Sat 11:15-1-2-4-5-6:50-7:50-9:50-10:45 Sun 1-2-4-5-6:50-7:50-9:50-10:45 Mon-Thu 1-2-4-5-6:50-7:50-9:40-10:45
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri-Sun 12:10-2:40 Mon-Thu 1:40
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri-Sun 5:10-7:40-10:15 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:20-9:50

South Edmonton Common
1525 99th St., 780-436-8585

Anna Karenina (PG) Fri-Sat 12:25-3:25-6:35-9:35 Sun 1-4-7:15-10:20 Mon-Thu 12:55-3:55-6:50-9:50
Argo (14A) Fri-Sat 12:55-3:45-6:55-9:55 Sun 12:35-3:20-6:25-9:20 Mon-Thu 12:50-3:40-6:40-9:35
A Christmas Story (STC) Sat 11
Flight (18A) Fri-Sat 12:30-3:40-6:50-10 Sun 12:25-3:30-6:40-9:55 Mon-Tue 12:15-3:45-6:55-10:05 Wed-Thu 12:15-3:45-10:05
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10 No Passes Thu 10
Killing Them Softly (14A) Fri-Sat 11:40-2:35-5:25-8-11 Sun 12:15-2:50-5:35-8-10:35 Mon-Thu 1:50-4:25-7:45-10:15
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 12:40-4-7:25-10:45 Sun 12:50-3:50-6:45-9:50 Mon-Wed 1-4:05-7:10-10:10 Thu 1:10-4:05-7
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sat 12-3:20-6:45-10:25 Sun 11:30-3:05-6:40-10 Mon 2:25-6:35-9:55 Tue-Wed 2:25-6:25-9:55 Thu 2:25-6:15-9:55
The Metropolitan Opera: Un Ballo in Maschera Live (STC) Sat 10:55
Miracle on 34th Street (STC) Sun 12:45 Wed 7
Pitch Perfect (PG) Fri 12:10-2:55-5:40-8:15-10:55 Sat 5:40-8:15-10:55 Sun 4:20-6:55-9:35 Mon-Wed 12:30-3:15-6:30-9:20 Thu 12:30-3:25-10:20
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri-Sat 1:55-5-8:10-10:50 Sun 11:40-2:20-4:55-7:35-10:10 Mon 1:25-4-7:10-10:10 Tue-Wed 1:25-4-7:05-10:10 Thu 4-7:05-10:10
Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Red Dawn (PG) Fri-Sat 2-4:35-7:05-9:30 Sun 2-4:30-7-9:25 Mon-Thu 1:45-4:20-7:20-9:45
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Sun 11:30 Mon-Thu 12
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:10-4:50-7:30-10:10 Mon-Thu 2:40-5:30-8
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Thu 7:30
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri-Sat 1:20-4:15-7:15-10:20 Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:15 Mon-Wed 12:40-3:30-6:30-9:25 Thu 4:10-7:10-10:15 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Skyfall (14A) Fri-Sat 11:45-12:15-3-3:30-6:35-7-9:45-10:15 Sun 11:45-1:05-3-3:10-6:20-6:50-9:30-10:05 Mon 12:25-1:10-3:50-4:30-7-9:05-10:15 Tue 12:35-1:10-3:50-4:30-7-8:05-10:15 Wed 12:35-1:10-3:50-4:30-6:55-8:05-10:15 Thu 12:05-1:05-3:20-4:15-6:35-6:55-7:05-10:15
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri-Sat 11:35-12:05-2:20-2:50-5:15-5:35-7:55-8:25-10:40 Sun 11:35-12-2:15-2:45-5-5:30-8-8:15-10:35 Mon-Wed 12:10-12:45-3:05-3:35-6:45-7:15-9:30-10 Thu 12:10-12:45-3:05-3:35-6:45-7:15-9:30
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri-Sun 11:50 Mon-Thu 12:20
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:30-5:10-7:50-10:30 Mon-Thu 3-5:40-8:20

TELUS World of Science Edmonton Space And Science Centre, 1121-142 St., 780-451-3344

Flight of the Butterflies (STC) Fri-Sun 11-1-3-5-7 Mon-Thu 3
Hubble (G) Fri-Sun 8
The Light Before Christmas (STC) Fri 10-12-2 Sat-Sun 12-2-4 Mon-Thu 10
To the Arctic (G) Fri-Thu 4

Grandin Theatres
101-22 Sir Winston Churchill Ave., St. Albert,780-458-9822

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) No Passes Thu 10
Life of Pi (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-4:05-6:40-9:15
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Thu 1:20-3:20-5:15-7:25-9:20
Skyfall (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:30-6:15-9
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri-Thu 1:35-4:25-7-9:25
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri-Wed 1-3:05-5:10-7:20-9:30 Thu 1-3:05-5:10-7:20

Galaxy Cinemas Sherwood Park
2020 Sherwood Dr., Sherwood Park 780-416-0152

Argo (14A) Fri-Sun 4:05-10:05 Mon-Wed 10:05
A Christmas Story (STC) Sat 11
Flight (18A) Fri 6:55 Sat-Sun 12:50-6:55 Mon-Thu 6:55
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10
Killing Them Softly (14A) Fri 5:15-7:45-10:15 Sat-Sun 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:15 Mon-Thu 7:35-10
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri 4-7:05-10:10 Sat-Sun 1-4-7:05-10:10 Mon-Thu 7:05-10
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri 4:45-7:20-10 Sat-Sun 11:35-2:10-4:45-7:20-10 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:55

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2020 Sherwood Dr., Sherwood Park
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Red Dawn (PG) Fri 5:25-7:55-10:25 Sat-Sun 12:25-2:55-5:25-7:55-10:25 Mon-Thu 7:40-10:10
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Sun 11:40-2:10
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:40-7:15-9:45 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:40
Skyfall (14A) Fri 3:30-3:40-7-9:50-10:30 Sat-Sun 12:25-3:30-3:40-7-9:50-10:30 Mon-Thu 7-9:35-10:15
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 4:40-6:50-7:30-10:20 Sat 11:05-12:40-1:50-4:40-6:50-7:30-10:20 Sun 12:40-1:50-4:40-6:50-7:30-10:20 Mon-Thu 6:50-7:30-10:15
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Sat-Sun 11:30-2:05 Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:40-7:20-9:55 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:50

Leduc Cinemas
4702 50th St., Leduc
780-986-2728

Flight (18A) Fri-Thu 9:35
Life of Pi (PG) Sat-Sun 1 Tue 7
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri 7-9:40 Sat-Sun 3:40-7-9:40 Mon 7-9:40 Tue 9:40 Wed-Thu 7-9:40
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri 7:10-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:35-7:10-9:35 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:35
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Sun 3:30 Tue 7:05
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 7:05-9:30 Sat-Sun 3:30-7:05-9:30 Mon 7:05-9:30 Tue 9:30 Wed-Thu 7:05-9:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 6:55 Sat-Sun 12:55-3:40-6:55 Mon-Thu 6:55

Cineplex Odeon Windermere & VIP Cinemas
6151 Currents Drive NW
780-822-4250

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) No Passes Thu 10 No Passes Thu 10
Killing Them Softly (14A) Fri 3:50-6:30-9 Sat 12:20-3:10-7:30-9:50 Sun 12:20-4-7:30-9:50 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:45
Life of Pi 3D (PG) Fri 3:30-7:10-10 Sat 12:40-3:30-7:10-10:05 Sun 12:20-3:30-6:40-9:40 Mon-Wed 6:40-9:40 Thu 6:40-9:30 Fri 4:40-8:20 Sat 4:30-7:40 Sun 1:10-4:40-8:20 Mon-Wed 7:40 Thu 6:30
Lincoln (PG) Fri 3:40-7-10:15 Sat 12-3:20-6:40-10 Sun 12-3:20-6:35-9:50 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:45
The Metropolitan Opera: Un Ballo in Maschera Live (STC) Sat 10:55
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri 4:10-7:30-10:10 Sat 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:40-10:20 Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-9:40 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:30
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Sun 12:10
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 4:30-7:30-10 Sat 2:50-5:20-7:50-10:15 Sun 2:30-4:50-7:10-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:20
Skyfall (14A) Fri 5:40-9:20 Sat 12:40-5:30-9:30 Sun 2:10-5:40-9:20 Mon-Wed 6:30-9:55 Thu 9:50 Fri 3:40-6:50-10:15 Sat 12:30-3:40-6:50-10:15 Sun 12-3:10-6:30-9:45 Mon-Wed 6:40-9:50 Thu 7:30 Thu 6:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (PG) Fri 4:20-7:20-10:10 Sat 12-4-7-10 Sun 12:30-3:50-6:50-9:30 Mon-Thu 7-9:40 Fri 3:40-7-10:20 Sat 3:30-6:30-10:20 Sun 12:10-3:40-7-10 Mon-Wed 8:40 Thu 8:30
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Sat 12:50 Sun 12:40
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri 4-7:20-9:55 Sat 4:05-7:20-9:55 Sun 3:40-7-9:35 Mon-Wed 7-9:40 Thu 7

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Mars plans to play until his fingers bleed

New album. The out-of-the-box musician talks about what went into making his latest effort, Unorthodox Jukebox

NINA ETTRUP
Metro World News

Bruno Mars is anything but your standard musician. JAMES MOONEY

Bruno Mars was born and raised in sunny Hawaii. He's sold millions of records. And he has those chocolatey brown eyes. His shirt is mostly unbuttoned and he speaks slowly while stirring milk into a huge cup of coffee and settling into a huge, brown leather couch.

Relaxed, cool and confident — that's how he appears while talking about his new album, Unorthodox Jukebox. And he probably is, at least today. But that's not how he feels all the time. The 27-year-old singer had a very hard time getting started on the album, the successor to his hugely successful debut Doo-Wops & Hooligans from 2010.

"I went through writer's block — two months of being uninspired. It was just weeks and weeks of going back into the studio and trying to write something that means something. It's not easy. It gets scary, and I was afraid I'd never be able to write anything ever again."

"Suddenly, for some reason, it started flowing again. That part of my brain turned back on," he explains.

Bruno Mars thinks that it was the many months that he spent on tour after releasing Doo-Wops & Hooligans that made it difficult to get back into song-writing mode.

"Maybe it was because I was coming off tour and I was trying to get my mind to work like that again. You have such a repetitive life on tour, travelling and singing the same songs over and over again. When you take all of that away, the transition … You've been playing the same chords and now you're trying to teach yourself new chords," he says.

He's had the same idols since the 1980s. He's still a fan of Michael Jackson, Prince, Freddie Mercury and Sting — and yes, his new hit song Locked Out of Heaven may sound somewhat like The Police, he admits.

"There's an '80s kind of a feel to it. It wasn't planned, but my love for these chord progressions and the synth drum machines that were popularized in the 80s came out on this album much more than on the first one. I feel like … in the '80s there were singers, real strong singers," he says.

"Today, it's more like 'the era of computer-programmed.' There's a beauty in that too — I'm not a snob that's gonna say, 'This is not real music.'"

It's just not his taste. Bruno Mars likes the guys who played their instruments, till — as Bryan Adams said — their fingers bled. And that's how he's made a career for himself too.

A little more from Bruno

One more quote:

- **On the title of the album Unorthodox Jukebox.** "I was always told that my music was too unorthodox, too all over the place. That really chapped my ass, because I'm all over the place. The way I write music and all the music that I enjoy is what makes me unorthodox. To the suits that's a bad thing, because they have to think about marketing and what radio station will play this song and who will listen to it. Is it a young audience? An urban audience? A rock audience? I never understood all these questions."

Industry relying on Ke$ha, Bruno Mars, Angels & Airwaves

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

We've almost reached the end of the 2012 album release season. Will these albums help keep sales ahead of last year?

1 Dirty Love/Ke$ha feat. Iggy Pop

Includes the lyrics "Cockroaches do it in garbage cans/Rug merchants do it in Afghanistan."

2 Young Girls/Bruno Mars

The second video from Unorthodox Jukebox, which is due out on Tuesday. His label is hoping for a No. 1 debut.

3 Reel 1 (Diary)/Angels & Airwaves

One of the very last big-name releases of the year will come with Tom Hoppus' (Blink 182) side project on Dec. 18. Stomping the Phantom Brake Pedal is officially a double EP of "evolved" and "reimagined" tracks.

Rap group shakes up hip hop paradigm

Macklemore & Ryan Lewis. Rappers' gay-friendly song Same Love defies old genre conventions with style

Macklemore isn't ashamed to tell you he was scared when he saw some of the destinations for his upcoming tour.

Idaho. Montana. Texas.

None of those places in the Heartland seemed like they'd be receptive to Macklemore & Ryan Lewis' left-leaning, socially conscious message. A hostile reception seemed more likely — especially for the lightning-rod song Same Love, which offers support for the gay community.

To the 29-year-old rapper's surprise, he found the crowds singing the chorus right back at him. "Those were three places where people probably sang the loudest and it gives me some hope in the power of music and what music can do," said the MC, whose given name is Ben Haggerty. "To hear people's testimonials about Same Love changing the way that they feel about gay people or the language that they use in their everyday life, making them consider changing that language, or changing their hateful perspective on another group of people, it's exciting to see that music has that capability. It just affirms what you already believe, but to see it on a tangible level in these cities has been one of the greatest gifts of my career."

It's a time of plenty for the Seattle alternative hip-hop duo, which released its debut studio album, The Heist, to great acclaim last month. Haggerty and his producing and business partner Lewis sold more than 78,000 copies of the record the first week of release. That's a staggering sum for an independent release, putting the album at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 all-genre chart.

Haggerty said they expected to sell somewhere between 28,000 and 33,000 copies.

"It's a validation, absolutely," Haggerty said in a phone interview. "It's definitely a reward. But at the end of the day, it is a number and you try not to let your happiness be contingent upon a number. What it equates to is the fact people are resonating with the music, that the fans are supporting our album, that people wanted to be part of our record and not just download illegally, but financially get behind it and say, 'We believe in it.' And that is the biggest reward out of all of it."

What's happened in the six weeks since the release has been dizzying. Lewis said offers are coming from everywhere and the fans are increasing exponentially at every show. Things are happening so fast, reacting in real time to the changes in their popularity has been difficult. Used to dealing with fans in a very personal way, they're trying to engage larger groups of people.

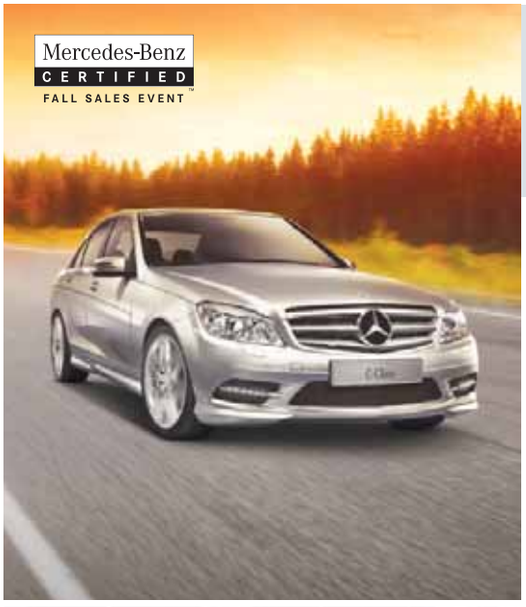
"Now we have to figure how to keep that intimate relationship with the fans in the midst of so many people," Lewis said. "And that's across the board. The shows get bigger. How do we adapt our shows to keep it as awesome as it was for 800 people to 4,000 people? We're adapting." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quote

"Now we have to figure how to keep that intimate relationship with the fans in the midst of so many people."

Ryan Lewis
Talking about how their rising fame is causing them to change things up.

Macklemore's debut album is The Heist. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

'Tis the season in the city for these two starlets

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Sarah Jessica Parker and Naomi Watts not only juggle A-list acting careers as well as their families, but they also somehow find the time to take advantage of New York City's many cultural opportunities (annoying, I know).

"We have incredible museums that are affordable and free, we have tons of wonderful ballet companies. I try to do all these things with my children. Simply walking up and down the streets of New York — there's art everywhere, there's things to talk about," said Parker Thursday night at the New 42 Gala, which honoured the Australia Council for the Arts as well as supported the New Victory Education Program.

Naomi Watts — who was there with her children, Sasha, 5, and Samuel, 4, and partner Liev Schreiber — agrees. "We've done a few shows with the kids. It's a treat," she said.

But lest you think Parker and Watts are so perfect they only fill their childrens' heads with intellectual goodness, rest assured both women have fallen prey to holiday craziness.

"We're pretty conventional," says Parker about her holidays with her family, which includes husband, actor Matthew Broderick, son James, 10, and twin daughters Marion and Tabitha, 3. "We like to be together, we like to eat, we play Yankee Trader."

Meanwhile, it seems like the Liev/Watts household has fallen victim to the holiday terrorist that is Elf on the Shelf. (For those of you lucky enough not to know what this is, the Elf on the Shelf is a doll who allegedly spies on your kids at Christmas time and has to be moved night after night by the parents. It's great for about a hot minute.)

"I think they're getting into the whole Santa Claus thing," Watts said about her little family. "They've got the Elf on the Shelf and every night he moves."

WITH REPORTING BY OLIVIA MORROW

Damage control a breeze after Sheen

The recent hubbub over Angus T. Jones urging fans to stop watching his hit sitcom, Two and a Half Men, and calling the show "filth" was apparently nothing the folks at CBS couldn't handle, at least according to network head Les Moonves.

"I don't think (the Angus situation has) quite been resolved, but after going through what we went through with Charlie Sheen, it's been a piece of cake," Moonves says in a statement to TMZ.

A second sleepover for Swift and Styles

Taylor Swift ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

The fledging romance between Taylor Swift and One Direction star Harry Styles appears to be heating up pretty quickly, if their latest rendezvous are any indication. Styles was spotted trying to sneak into the New York City hotel where Swift is staying, an overnight bag over his shoulder, according to Hollyscoop. That's the second night in a row the young music stars have spent together at the hotel this week.

Kate Middleton

Sovereign stork to arrive in the summer

It's going to be a summer baby for Kate Middleton, according to Life & Style. "She's due in July, which is a month full of significance for William," a source says. "His mother, Diana, was born on July 1, and his parents got married on July 29." As for who the godparents will be for the new prince or princess? Signs are pointing to Prince Harry and Pippa Middleton, according to ABC News. "Kate is very close to her sister, Pippa, and William is infinitely, in the same way, close to Prince Harry. So they are the obvious choice," royal contributor Victoria Arbiter Brown says. "They were the best man and the chief bridesmaid at their wedding, they're well-trusted, they're family."

Danny DeVito

Rhea Pearlman

Danny and Rhea's relationship as sunny as always?

Despite announcing in October that they'd separated, Danny DeVito and Rhea Pearlman aren't actually all that separated — at least according to DeVito. When asked by Extra how he's adjusting to life as a single man, DeVito says, "It's not something you adjust to. Rhea and I are really close. Actually still together, just separate, but together." In fact, DeVito insists divorce may not be in the cards for the Cheers alums. "We're working on it," he says when asked if a reconciliation might be on the way.

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LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
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If there's a liquid silver lining to winter being around the corner, it's that port season has officially arrived.

This time of year provides chilly nights and the opportunity for roaring fires, both perfect companions to a glass of the king of Portuguese wine.

For some of you, port carries more baggage than the Kardashian sisters on a three- day vacation. The term has been used by countries the world over (including Canada) on the labels of generic, booze-infused wines that totally take the regal name of port in vain.

Most have stopped, and true port is finding a new audience as a luxurious meal ender or cigar companion (if you're so inclined).

Choosing the port that's right for you can be a struggle. Most are expensive and not all are appropriate for drinking right away.

A Late Bottled Vintage style, like Taylor's 2005 LBV ($16.45 to $24.99), is a mid-priced blend of wines all produced in the same year. Smooth, with deep, dark berry fruit, an LBV is drinkable right out of the bottle, will keep for several weeks once opened and makes a great introduction to the world of port. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

Step up fancy factor with Prime Veal Chop

Prime Veal Chop with Pesto and Feta Cheese. It may be hard to believe, but this delicious recipe takes just three ingredients to make

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

I created this recipe for The Pickle Barrel chain of restaurants in Toronto.

The veal chop is beautifully lean and tender. The combination of pesto and feta complements it beautifully and gives the dish a Mediterranean twist.

This goes well with grilled vegetables and mashed potatoes.

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking oil.

Ingredients

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 14 minutes

- four 6- to 8-oz prime veal chops with bone in (also known as the French cut)
- 2 tbsp pesto
- 2 tbsp crumbled feta cheese

This recipe serves four. BRIAN MACDONALD, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

2. Spray a non-stick skillet with cooking oil and place over medium-high heat. Cook the veal on both sides just until seared and browned, approximately 2 minutes per side. Place on the prepared baking sheet.

3. Spread both sides of the veal with pesto sauce and sprinkle with the feta, patting the cheese down firmly.

4. Bake for approximately 10 minutes, until the internal temperature registers about 135 F for medium- rare, or to desired doneness. Let rest 5 minutes. **ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

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ETS

Have a few gaps in your schedule you're looking to fill?
Whether you're hoping to dance, drink or just relax, check out these hot upcoming events.

MIX OF SIX
Lucy Haines
edmonton@metronews.ca

No mugs, no ties

Who wants another (fill in the blank — tie, mug, pair of socks and underwear) this Christmas? If nothing else, you're guaranteed to find something unique to put under the tree at the annual Butterdome Craft Sale, on through Sunday at the U of A. You may even have fun shopping while you peruse the one-of-a-kind crafts and gifts from more than 240 designers and artists — all Canadian-made. Get those shopping juices flowing! Tickets are $7 for adults, $5 for students and youth, and kids under 12 get in free.

Classic tale goes modern

There's so much great theatre in Edmonton that's truly worth celebrating and supporting. Case in point: On now through Dec. 10, Walterdale Playhouse presents a modern twist on Moliere's The Misanthrope in a version by Martin Crimp. The protagonist Alceste is transported into modern-day London, wrestling with his disdain for society but love for a woman. Director Janine Waddell-Hodder leads a cast of 10 in a fine, thought-provoking tale. Tickets are $12 to $18 at Tix on the Square. Call 780-420-1757or buy at the door one hour before showtime, cash only.

Ice time

NHL lockout? Whatever. There's hockey in town, very good hockey worth your attention. Tonight, for example, the Edmonton Oil Kings host provincial rivals Calgary Hitmen at 7 p.m. at Rexall Place. And get this, for $20, you get a seat and a teddy bear to toss onto the ice when the Oil Kings score their first goal. It's the annual Teddy Bear Toss event, benefitting CHED Santas Anonymous. A feel-good event for all. Just go.

Festive finery at the Fairmont

December is a beautiful month to enjoy the offerings at the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. The hotel offers regal Christmas trees and a giant gingerbread house in the lobby, along with a roaring fire in the lounge. But there's more. Executive chef Andrew Ihasz has created a festive menu at the Mac to soften even the scroogiest of hearts. Try the holiday brunch Sundays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Empire Ballroom, or the Nutcracker Tea and Tour, which includes a guided walkabout of the hotel with those yummy pastries and tea.

Carol of the bells

Gotta get a Christmas concert in this week, don't you think? How about this one: The Greenwood Singers celebrate the Many Moods of Christmas on Dec. 10 at 8 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church (10025-105 St.) There will be handbells, courtesy of the U of A Faculty of Education handbell ringers, along with beloved carols and favourite holiday tunes. It's backed by a full rhythm section, organ and piano, so wrap this up with a big red bow and go have a listen! Tickets are $20, $18 for students and seniors at Tix on the Square, 780-420-1757.

Xmas through the years

We all know the pleasures of Fort Edmonton Park in the warm weather months, but how about now? Through December, the park hosts Christmas Reflections, which allows visitors a horse and wagon ride along snowy, turn-of-the-century streets. There's carolers in period costume, beautiful window displays, crafts and a stop for hot chocolate or cider. Fresh holiday baking is guaranteed too. It's a quaint way to celebrate the season and get out of the shopping mall. Check fortedmontonpark.ca for available dates.

HOLIDAY 2012 m gift guide

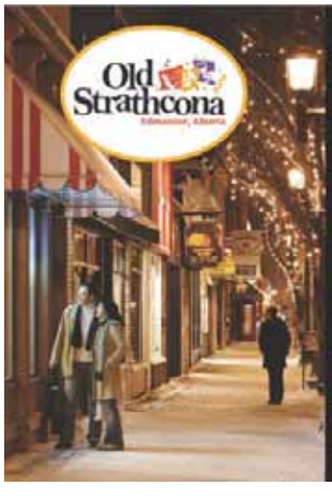
TONGRO IMAGES/THINKSTOCK

Warm clothing ideas for the children this season — PAGE 44

Look your best during — and after — the holidays — PAGES 38, 40, 42

Click on these ideas for the videophile on your gift list — PAGE 36

18 shopping days left



Old Strathcona

Experience the historic modern past and you will find the perfect future present! Unwrap the gifts that Whyte Ave has to offer and reveal the "Magic" of a Whyte Christmas.

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www.oldstrathcona.ca

Whyte Ave in Old Strathcona

Television Wonderland

Sharp 90-inch LED TV — $9,999.99, below, Apple TV — $109, right.

Gift options for your viewing pleasure

MIKE YAWNEY
For Metro

Wouldn't it be nice to wake up to a brand new television Christmas morning? Whether you are looking for a new TV or simply want to add to your home theatre, there are plenty of options for you or the videophile on your shopping list.

Panasonic Viera TCL42U5 — $499

Not everyone needs all the bells and whistles of some of the more expensive televisions on the market. Sometimes you just want to watch TV. This 42-inch 1080p LCD TV gives a great picture for a fraction of the price of most other sets. You still get a variety of inputs (including three HDMI) plus you will benefit from Eco mode, which will save you money on your energy bills.

LG Cinema 3D LM9600 — $2,299

If your heart is set on a 3-D TV, look no further than this LED TV from LG. It has the ability to convert any 2-D content into breathtaking 3-D on the fly. Everything can be controlled through simple gestures using the Magic Remote, or simply tell your TV what you want it to do through voice control. You will find tons of inputs on the back, plus it's Wi-Fi enabled.

Sharp 90-inch LED TV — $9,999.99

Good luck bringing this one down the chimney Santa! Sharp's 90-inch LED TV is the largest in Canada. Experience movies the way they were meant to be seen — on the big screen. The larger screen allows for bigger speakers, giving you a theatre-like experience right in your home. Gamers will enjoy the Vyper Drive feature that reduces lag times while playing games. You can also connect wirelessly to the web or enjoy apps such as Netflix. This beautiful television comes with a hefty price tag, so don't even think about asking for it if there is even the slightest chance you are on the naughty list.

Samsung Blu-ray Player BD-E6500 — $219

Not only can this Blu-ray device play your favourite high-definition movies in 2-D and 3-D, it can turn any TV into a smart TV with built-in apps such as Netflix, YouTube and Facebook. If you already own a Samsung smartphone you can use it to control the action. The built-in USB port also allows playback of videos, photos and music from your USB devices.

Apple TV — $109

Access all of your iTunes content directly on your television. This tiny media player ensures all of your movies, TV shows, and music are readily available, plus get access to Netflix, YouTube and Vimeo without logging onto your computer. One of my favourite features has to be AirPlay, which allows you to stream content from your iPad, MacBook, or iMac right to your television with a simple click. Great for presentations or simply playing games and apps on the big screen.

Logitech Harmony 650 Remote — $79.99

At one time you had to pay a fortune to get an amazing universal remote. The Harmony 650 proves that's no longer the case. Complete with colour display, this advanced remote can control up to five devices at a fraction of the price of other high-end remotes. While it does require an Internet connected PC or Mac to set up, once it's up and running it simplifies even the most complex home theatre setup.

Samsung Blu-ray Player BD-E6500 — $219, left, Panasonic Viera TCL42U5 — $499, top left, Logitech Harmony 650 Remote — $79.99, top right.

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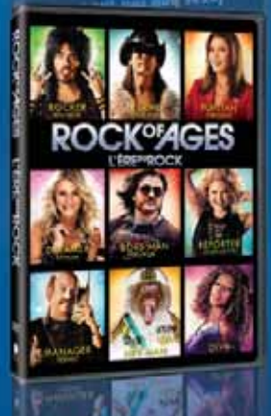

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Beauty bounty

JANINE FALCON
For Metro

From beauty empowerment to fragranced skin, from shimmering nails to luscious hair, these gift ideas have her (and you) covered.

More than a makeup book, **Bobbi Brown Pretty Powerful** (Chronicle Books, 2012) is a confidence-builder from a pro who empowers with must-try tips and tricks. $34.95 hardcover, chapters.indigo.ca.

Give her nail polish collection a brand new sheen with **YSL La Laque Couture Top Coat in Première Neige**, an iridescent top coat that sparkles over any colour. $27, Holt Renfrew.

Any scent from the Byredo Parfums collection is a unique and special gift for fragrance lovers; **Byredo Black Saffron**, an Oriental Spicy eau de parfum is the newest. $235, Holt Renfrew.

Luscious **LoveFresh Lemon Verbena Body Butter** pampers skin with aloe, chamomile and calendula extracts, and is made sans parabens or petrolatum. $24, lovefresh.com.

Glamorous yet understated like its creator Aerin Lauder, the **Aerin Holiday Style Palette** offers foolproof shadows and subtle highlight powder. $78, esteelauder.ca.

Feminine and fragrant, **Valentino Valentina Body Scrub** is a creamy exfoliant in a lovely frosted jar she'll keep for years. $78, thebay.com.

The award-winning complexion-saver of the season, this natural moisture booster relieves exczema. **Consonant HydrExtreme Serum**, $72, consonantbody.com.

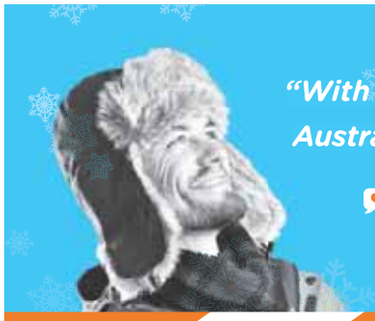
She'll swoon over **MAC's Sinfully Chic Face Kit**, a charming neutral makeup + brush set. Trust. $85, maccosmetics.com.

Soft, shiny, swingy hair is hers with silicone-free **Shu Uemura Cleansing Oil Shampoo**, which gently purifies all hair types, including fine, limp, and oily. $55.

Below: Valentino Valentina Body Scrub.

Left: YSL La Laque Couture Top Coat in Première Neige. Right: LoveFresh Lemon Verbena Body Butter. Below: Byredo Black Saffron.

Above: Aerin Holiday Style Palette. Far left: Shu Uemura Cleansing Oil Shampoo. Left: Consonant HydrExtreme Serum. Bottom: MAC's Sinfully Chic Face Kit.



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Grooming gifts for him

JANINE FALCON
For Metro

From wake-up to spruce-up, these manly gift ideas will help him put his best self forward before his first coffee of the day.

Perk up his morning routine with the ultra-fresh **L'Occitane Verdon Adventure** set, which includes shower gel, soap, deodorant and eau de toilette. $82, loccitane.ca.

He'll appreciate the weightless **Biotherm Homme Force Supreme** anti-aging formulas that promise smoother, firmer, more comfortable skin. Lotion, $45 and Serum, $70; biotherm.ca.

If he's into natural stuff, he'll dig non-oily **Weleda After Shave Balm**, which cools and soothes with organic jojoba seed oil, aloe and myrrh. $26.99, well.ca.

Set him up for next Movember with the waterproof **Philips Styleshaver**, which trims, styles and shaves with easy precision. $99.99, personaledge.com.

He doesn't have to be a sexy vampire (or an actor who plays one) to wear **Calvin Klein Encounter**, a warm, woody scent. $67, thebay.com.

Ideal for the man who likes simple yet sophisticated skincare, **Shiseido's Men's Essentials Gift Set** includes a handsome toiletry case. $70, thebay.com

Help him love his hair more with **Kerastase Anti-Oiliness Daily Treatment Shampoo** and **Leave-In Treatment**. $36 each, kerastase.com.

For the multi-tasking man, the **Jack Black Core Collection** includes cleanser+toner, shave-oil cream+skin conditioner, and moisturizer+SPF. $52, ebeauty.ca.

Stock his gym bag with zesty essentials, such as **Crabtree & Evelyn's West Indian Lime Travel Set**. $26, Crabtree & Evelyn boutiques.

Above, from left to right: Calvin Klein Encounter, Philips Styleshaver, Kerastase Anti-Oiliness Daily Treatment Shampoo. Right: Jack Black Core Collection.

Above left: Biotherm Homme Force Supreme. Left: L'Occitane Verdon Adventure set. Above right: Shiseido's Men's Essentials Gift Set. Right: Crabtree & Evelyn's West Indian Lime Travel Set.

Tips to survive mall shopping

Stay sane. Timing, patience and online research will help

Try going to the mall before work for more convenient parking, less people and first crack at the newly restocked shelves. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

The holidays are a whole lot of fun — there are parties, snacks and plenty of chances to unwind.

There's absolutely no downside except, of course, going to the mall.

At this time of year, the mall is hot, crowded, and unpleasant, but shopping experts at RedFlagDeals.com have put together a list of tips that will help you handle it like a pro.

Go against the flow

Try hitting the mall before work for more convenient parking, less people — and the first crack at newly restocked shelves.

Good things come to those who wait

For friends or relatives that you won't see until after the holidays, consider holding off on shopping for their gifts. Yes, if you head out on Boxing Day the mall will be just as hot, crowded, and unpleasant, but the deals might be better.

Shop online

It's convenient and comfortable to shop online, so do as much of that as you can. And even if you are shopping in-store, make sure you research prices and items online first. Bargain hunting websites are a good place to start.

Layer up

If you are headed to the mall, dress lightly, in easy-to-remove layers. And bring something to stuff that heavy winter coat in.

NEWS CANADA

New Guide available only with the Motorola DCX3510-M HDPVR. Prices subject to sales and provincial tax. *When you sign up for Shaw Easy Own program, you will obtain ownership of the purchased hardware immediately with the understanding that you are required to pay Shaw for the hardware in 36 pre-authorized monthly instalments. A valid credit card is required to sign up for the Shaw Easy Own Program. You also agree any outstanding balance on the purchased hardware is due in full and immediately payable to Shaw if Shaw Phone, Cable and Internet services are terminated. Additional terms and conditions will apply. Offer subject to change without notice. All Shaw services are subject to our Joint Terms of Use and Privacy Policy located at http://www.shaw.ca. © Disney/Pixar. All Rights Reserved.

Teen dream beauty and body care

JANINE FALCON
For Metro

From savvy style advice to smart skincare to totally adorbs makeup, great gift ideas for the teens in your life.

An energizing citrus kick in the morning shower via a **LUSH Cool Christmas** duo is just the thing for sleepyhead teens. $16.95, lush.ca

Whether your teen is obsessed with fashion or just developing his or her own style, **Learn to Speak Fashion: A Guide to Creating, Showcasing and Promoting Your Style** (Owl Kids, 2012) offers smart insider insight, advice and encouragement you'll love too. $16.95 paperback, chapters.indigo.ca.

Put the kybosh on clogged teenage pores with a **Clarisonic Mia** for deep-cleaning sessions every other day. $139, sephora.ca.

No girl can resist mini beauty treats; the **Soap & Glory Small Wonders Gift Set** totes fits the mini bill (and your wallet). $20, Shoppers Drug Mart.

If you love makeup, you'll want to snag a **Stila Snow Angel Color Palette** — 18 shadows, 12 blushes and a mascara (not shown) — for yourself, too. $51, sephora.ca.

Get your teen on a good-skin regimen with a **Dermalogica Clean Start Starter Kit**, which handles pesky zits, too. $45.50, cleanstart.dermalogica.com.ca

From the fashion queen of whimsy, this **Anna Sui Holiday Collection** includes blush, shadow, lip gloss and a sweet lacy pouch. $50, Sears.ca and Murale.ca.

The Body Shop For Men Maca Root Scrub & Shave Set sets your young fellow up with face wash, moisturizer — and eye cream Dad can swipe. $35, thebodyshop.ca.

Nourishing essentials for feet and hands, such as the **Burt's Bees Best of Burt's Bees Set**, are easy stocking stuffers. $24.99, burtsbees.ca.

The Body Shop For Men Maca Root Scrub & Shave Set.

Above: Dermalogica Clean Start Starter Kit. Right: Anna Sui Holiday Collection. Left: Burt's Bees Best of Burt's Bees Set.

Lower left: Stila makeup palettes. Right: LUSH Cool Christmas.

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Recipe. All-In-One Spiced Chocolate Loaf

This Green & Black's Organic All-In-One Spiced Chocolate Loaf recipe will be a sure hit during the holidays.

Ingredients:

- 50 g dark (70 per cent cocoa solids) chocolate
- 100 g plain flour
- 125 g icing sugar
- 1 tsp ground mixed spice
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 175 g unsalted butter at room temperature, plus extra for greasing
- 4 medium free-range eggs
- 100 g dark chocolate with ginger

Instructions:

1 Preheat the oven to 180 C/350 F/gas mark 4, and butter a 22-centimetre loaf pan.

2 Melt the dark chocolate using double boiler method (placing a microwave or heatproof bowl over a pan of gently simmering water) ensuring the bowl doesn't touch the water. Set aside to cool.

3 Blend the flour, sugar, spices and baking powder. This can be achieved using a food processor or a hand-held electric mixer.

4 Add the butter, cooled melted chocolate and the eggs and blend until evenly combined. Pour the mixture into the loaf pan and bake for about 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Carefully remove the loaf from the pan and cool on a wire rack.

5 Meanwhile, melt the ginger chocolate bar using the double boiler method and drizzle over the cooled cake. Makes one loaf.

Tip: You can also drizzle the loaf with other Green & Black's Organic chocolate. Dark, milk or white chocolate would also complement this cake's flavours.

Dark, milk or white chocolate would also complement this cake's flavours. CONTRIBUTED

RECIPE COMPLIMENTS OF GREEN & BLACK'S ORGANIC HOLIDAY 2012

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Kid-friendly gear

The Rockstar Pop Colour Skinny Jeans, $44.50, available at Old Navy, oldnavy.ca.

Girls Sequin Dress, $18, available at Walmart, walmart.ca.

Boys Sweater, $12, available at Walmart, walmart.ca.

Firefly Fuzzy Animal Toque, $19.99 each, available at Sport Chek, sportchek.ca.

Hooded Sweater Dress With Leggings, $19.99, available at Winners, winners.ca.

Boys Hoodie, $12, available at Walmart, walmart.ca.

Toddler Wazzup Beanie, Various Styles, $20 each, available at O'Neill, oneill.com.

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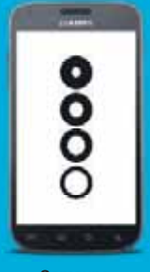

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Low-stress shopping

EDEN SPODEK
YummyMummyClub.ca

Looking for deals online can help alleviate some of the holiday shopping stress. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

December is supposed to be the time of holiday cheer.

Yet, so often we get stressed out when it comes to holiday shopping. Stores are crowded, kids are nagging for that "must-have" new toy or electronic gadget, not to mention teachers' gifts, and something for the BFF who has everything but insists on upholding the gift exchange you have been doing since you shared a university dorm. Then there's finding that special something for the love of your life.

Here are some tips to help make life easier, not just this month, but all year round.

Make a list in advance

When you make a list in advance and stick to it, you will reduce the risk of impulse buying and cut down on browsing time.

Shop online

Browse, research, comparison shop, and find unique gifts all from the comfort of your own keyboard. It's easy to look for the best deals. With the strong Canadian dollar, consider cross-border shopping. Look for retailers who offer deals on shipping and free gift wrapping too.

Buy teachers' gifts as a class

Get together with other parents and pool your money together so you can buy a group gift. Gift certificates from a local bookstore or mall allow your child's teacher to choose something they will enjoy instead of toss out.

Donate to a favourite charity in someone's honour

These days, pretty much every charity accepts donations online — it's quick and easy, and with a minimum donation you will get a tax receipt, too. It may not be as much fun as unwrapping presents but it feels wonderful to do something for others less fortunate while cutting down unnecessary gifts that would otherwise clutter your home.

Watch for online giveaways

There are lots of great giveaways on blogs, Twitter and community sites, including YummyMummyClub. The chances of winning are surprisingly pretty good — why not at least try?

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Sidney Crosby listens as NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr speaks to reporters on Thursday in New York. MARY ALTAFFER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fehr-ing the worst: NHL talks stall again

Day 82. No negotiations planned after NHLPA's proposal rejected by league

Quoted

"It looks like this is not going to be resolved in the immediate future."

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr

The NHL labour talks have hit another roadblock — and this one appears to be massive.

After two optimistic days that suggested a deal could be imminent, negotiations between the league and the NHL Players' Association broke off dramatically Thursday.

The NHLPA presented a new offer on Thursday afternoon, a proposal that union head Donald Fehr called "a clear outline" to end the dispute.

Fehr said he believed the two sides are "clearly very close if not on top of one another in connection with most of the major issues."

The league flatly rejected the offer, saying the two sides aren't close despite what Fehr says.

"I don't know why he did that," an angry Gary Bettman told a news conference.

The NHL commissioner said any new offers the league made this week are now off the table.

"The take or give or bottom line on all this is: It appears that the union is suggesting because we made substantial movements in certain areas that we're close to a deal," said Bettman. "But those moves were contingent on the union specifically agreeing on other things, which, while the union may have moved towards, didn't agree to."

During talks this week, the league said it was willing to increase the amount of deferred transition money paid to the players to $300 million US — which sat directly between what had most recently been tabled by the NHL ($211 million) and NHLPA ($393 million).

Another issue that surfaced was the league's desire to see a 10-year term on the collective bargaining agreement. The union's offer Thursday was for eight years with an option for opting out after Year 6.

"I'm disappointed beyond belief that we are where we are tonight," said Bettman.

Fehr's comments took an equally negative tone.

"What can we tell the hockey fans of Canada? You can tell them that it looks like this is not going to be resolved in the immediate future," Fehr said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Broncos trample Raiders, win eighth straight

After overwhelming another overmatched division rival, Peyton Manning and the streaking Denver Broncos can turn their attention to much more meaningful opponents.

Manning threw for 310 yards and had his 30th touchdown pass of the season on the game's opening drive to help the Broncos roll to their eighth straight victory, 26-13 over the Oakland Raiders on Thursday night.

Knowshon Moreno ran for 119 yards and a score on a career-high 32 carries, and Matt Prater kicked four field goals to help the Broncos (10-3) move a half-game ahead of New England and Baltimore for the second-best record in the AFC. Carson Palmer threw one interception that thwarted a possible scoring chance for the Raiders and lost a fumble that set up a touchdown for the Broncos as Oakland lost its sixth straight game.

Denver visits Baltimore next week in a game that will help decide who gets a first-round playoff bye.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Star free agents left waiting after winter meetings

As teams headed home from the baseball winter meetings on Thursday in Nashville, the biggest free agents were still on the market.

The availability of slugger Josh Hamilton and pitcher Zack Greinke held up decisions on other signings and possible trades involving Rangers star Michael Young and the Mets' Cy Young Award winner R.A. Dickey.

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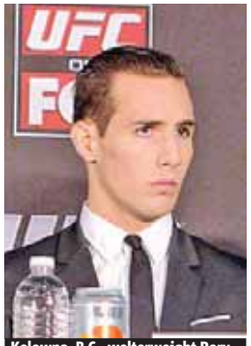
Resumes indicating "Mechanic Position" must be received by **4:00 pm Monday, December 10th, 2012.** Please submit resumes to:

Kevin Kinzer, Shop Supervisor, Flagstaff County, Box 358, Sedgewick, AB T0B 4C0 or Fax to (780) 384-3635 or email kkinzer@flagstaff.ab.ca.

This position will remain open until a suitable candidate is selected. We thank all applicants for their interest; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Penn and MacDonald out for blood at UFC show


Kelowna, B.C., welterweight Rory MacDonald THE CANADIAN PRESS

UFC. Welterweight rivals simmering ahead of weekend bout

Rory "Ares" MacDonald and B.J. "The Prodigy" Penn continue to steal the show in the buildup to this weekend's UFC show, the tension between the two welterweights positively sizzling at Thursday's pre-fight news conference.

There was a definite yin and yang as the show began in the Seattle Centre Pavilion, adjacent to the KeyArena.

A stone-faced MacDonald, dressed impeccably in suit and tie, stared at the audience as if he was attending a sentencing hearing rather than promoting an MMA card.

Penn, whose wardrobe selection consisted of finding a bjpenn.com T-shirt to wear, was the picture of relaxation until midway through the news conference when asked about his reaction to comments from MacDonald.

"Rory said he took this fight because he really wants to hurt me. He said I'm probably going to die in the ring and he better be ready to back up everything he said," said Penn, his eyes burning like a laser in MacDonald's direction.

Asked if he felt disrespected, the 33-year-old Penn didn't bite but repeated that the 23-year-old Canadian had better back up his comment on Saturday in the cage.

"I'm ready," replied an icy MacDonald. "Don't worry about that."

The debate went downhill after that.

"We'll see," said Penn.

"We will see," answered MacDonald. THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Rowdy' Ronda Rousey shows off her UFC bantamweight championship belt

UFC president Dana White used a news conference for Saturday's televised card in Seattle to announce Rousey's UFC launching pad. He bounded on stage with a spare championship belt, declining to say why until he ended the mystery some 20 minutes later. "Bring the champ out here," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grudge match. GSP wants to settle 'unfinished business' with Nick Diaz

Georges St-Pierre is putting a proposed super-fight with Anderson Silva to the side to pursue "unfinished business" with Nick Diaz.

UFC president Dana White says the Montreal mixed martial arts star has asked to fight Diaz next.

White told reporters Thursday that St-Pierre (23-2) made the request after returning from vacation following his welterweight title defence against Carlos Condit at UFC 154 in Montreal.

"We were talking about Anderson Silva," White said. "He (St-Pierre) said, 'I want Nick Diaz. Me and Nick Diaz have unfinished business. We were supposed to fight. That's the fight that I want.'

Georges St-Pierre GETTY IMAGES FILE

"Georges St-Pierre has been a phenomenal champion, a phenomenal human being, just a great guy to deal with for us. And he doesn't ask for things. So if he wants to fight Nick Diaz and Nick Diaz wants to fight him, then that's probably the fight we'll make."

St-Pierre and Diaz were slated to fight last year but White yanked Diaz, who does not play well with others, for being a no-show at news conferences in Toronto and Las Vegas.

Diaz was replaced by Condit but St-Pierre injured his knee in training. Condit then beat Diaz in February for the interim title, earning the right to meet the Canadian champion in Montreal last month. THE CANADIAN PRESS

UFC 155

Forrest Griffin out with knee injury

Former light-heavyweight champion Forrest Griffin has had to pull out of UFC 155 due to a knee injury.

"Forrest Has MCL tear and ACL strain," UFC president Dana White tweeted Wednesday. "20 cc's of blood removed from his knee and the saga continues at the UFC!!"

Griffin was due to face Phil "Mr. Wonderful" Davis.

Others already off the Dec. 29 card in Las Vegas through injury include lightweight Gray Maynard and middleweight Chris Weidman.

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Carmelo-less Knicks dump slumping Heat

NBA. Knicks strengthen their grip on the Eastern Conference despite Melo's absence

Thursday's game

Knicks	Heat
112	92

Raymond Felton scored a season-high 27 points, and the New York Knicks connected on 18 3-pointers to more than offset the absence of Carmelo Anthony while topping Miami for the second time this season, beating the Heat 112-92 on Thursday night.

Steve Novak scored 18 points, J.R. Smith added 13 and Tyson Chandler scored 13 for the Knicks, who won their fifth straight and moved 1 1/2 games clear of Miami for the best record in the Eastern Conference. The Knicks made eight 3-pointers in the third quarter alone, the most by any NBA team in any quarter so far this season.

Anthony sat out, one night after needing five stitches to close a cut on the middle finger of his left hand.

LeBron James nearly picked up his second straight triple-double — 31 points, 10 rebounds, nine assists — in Miami's second straight loss. Dwyane Wade scored 13 points, Chris Bosh had 12 and Udonis Haslem added 10 for the Heat, who fell to 8-1 at home.

Rasheed Wallace scored 12 and Jason Kidd added 11 for the Knicks, who finished 18 for 44 from 3-point range.

It was tied at 53 at the half, and the third quarter changed everything for the Knicks. Kidd made a 3-pointer, Felton followed with consecutive 3s and New York was up by nine with 9:42 left in the period.

There was one run late in the third, a 13-3 burst by Miami that got the Heat within eight in the final seconds of the quarter. It was the last — and really, the only — gasp for Miami, as the Knicks just kept firing away in the fourth. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Knicks centre Tyson Chandler, right, shoots over Heat forward Chris Bosh in Miami on Thursday night. ALAN DIAZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	13	4	.765	—
Miami	12	4	.750	1/2
Atlanta	10	5	.667	2
Chicago	9	8	.529	4
Brooklyn	11	6	.647	2
Philadelphia	10	8	.556	31/2
Boston	10	8	.556	31/2
Indiana	10	9	.526	4
Milwaukee	8	9	.471	5
Charlotte	7	10	.412	6
Orlando	7	11	.389	61/2
Detroit	6	14	.300	81/2
Cleveland	4	15	.211	10
Toronto	4	15	.211	10
Washington	2	13	.133	10

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	13	3	.813	1/2
San Antonio	15	4	.789	—
Oklahoma City	15	4	.789	—
L.A. Clippers	12	6	.667	21/2
Golden State	11	7	.611	31/2
Houston	9	8	.529	5
Utah	10	10	.500	51/2
L.A. Lakers	9	10	.474	6
Denver	9	10	.474	6
Minnesota	8	9	.471	6
Dallas	8	10	.444	61/2
Portland	8	11	.421	7
Phoenix	7	12	.368	8
Sacramento	5	12	.294	9
New Orleans	5	12	.294	9

Division leaders ranked in top four positions and best eight teams qualify for playoffs

Thursday's results
New York at Miami
Dallas at Phoenix
Wednesday's results
Indiana 99 Portland 92
New York 100 Charlotte 98
Boston 104 Minnesota 94
Golden State 104 Detroit 97
Atlanta 108 Denver 104
L.A. Lakers 103 New Orleans 87
Chicago 95 Cleveland 85
San Antonio 110 Milwaukee 99
Utah 87 Orlando 81
Sacramento 107 Toronto 100
L.A. Clippers 112 Dallas 90
Friday's games
Denver at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Boston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Golden State at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Memphis at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Charlotte at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.
Houston at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Toronto at Utah, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Oklahoma City, 9:30 p.m.
Orlando at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Saturday's games
Phoenix at L.A. Clippers, 3:30 p.m.
Golden State at Washington, 7 p.m.
San Antonio at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Memphis, 8 p.m.
New York at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Houston, 8 p.m.
Sacramento at Portland, 10 p.m.
Sunday's games
Toronto at L.A. Clippers, 3:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Brooklyn, 6 p.m.
Indiana at Oklahoma City, 7 p.m.
Denver at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Orlando at Phoenix, 8 p.m.
Utah at L.A. Lakers, 9:30 p.m.

LATE WEDNESDAY

KINGS 107, RAPTORS 100

TORONTO (100)
Lowry 9-20 12-12 34, Pietrus 8-15 3-3 21, DeRozan 7-16 0-2 14, Davis 5-10 3-4 13, Bargnani 3-14 2-2 8, Johnson 1-1 2-2 4, Calderon 1-3 1-1 3, Valanciunas 1-4 1-2 3, Ross 0-3 0-0 0. Totals 35-86 24-28 100.
SACRAMENTO (107)
Cousins 11-18 3-3 25, Evans 7-16 7-12 23, Thompson 6-11 1-1 13, Salmons 4-7 2-2 12, Brooks 2-8 6-8 11, Fredette 2-5 2-2 7, Robinson 2-3 3-4 7, Johnson 3-5 0-1 6, Thornton 1-7 1-1 3, Hayes 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 38-82 25-34 107.

Toronto	29	18	29	24 —100
Sacramento	29	26	23	29 —107

3-Point Goals—Toronto 6-23 (Lowry 4-9, Pietrus 2-6, Bargnani 0-6, Calderon 0-1, Ross 0-1). Sacramento 6-15 (Evans 2-4, Brooks 1-3, Thornton 0-3, Salmons 2-2, Fredette 1-2, Cousins 0-1). **Rebounds—**Toronto 40 (Davis 11, Pietrus 6, DeRozan 5, Lowry 5, Johnson 4, Bargnani 3, Valanciunas 3, Ross 2, Calderon 1). Sacramento 47 (Cousins 13, Thompson 10, Johnson 8, Robinson 4, Hayes 3, Thornton 3, Salmons 2, Evans 2, Brooks 1, Fredette 1). **Assists—**Toronto 25 (Lowry 11). Sacramento 18 (Salmons 7). **Total Fouls—**Toronto 23, Sacramento 18.
A—12,476 at Sacramento. T—2:23

GOLF

DUBAI LADIES MASTERS

At Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Par 72 (35-37)
Second Round

Shanshan Feng, China	66-67—131
Felicity Johnson, England	68-67—135
Cindy Lacrosse, United States	67-69—136
Joanna Klatten, France	71-65—136
Caroline Masson, Germany	68-68—136
Gwladys Nocera, France	68-68—136
Lexi Thompson, United States	69-68—137
Carlota Ciganda, Spain	70-68—138
Lorie Kane, Canada	68-70—138
Jennie Lee, United States	70-69—139
Bree Arthur, Australia	69-70—139
Lydia Hall, Wales	68-71—139
Beth Allen, United States	70-70—140
Caroline Hedwall, Sweden	69-71—140
Florentyna Parker, England	66-74—140
Klara Spilkova, Czech Republic	67-73—140
Julieta Granada, Paraguay	70-70—140
Dewi Claire Schreefel, Netherlands	69-71—140
Linda Wessberg, Sweden	70-70—140
Tandi Cuningham, South Africa	72-69—141

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

At Sysney
Par: 72
(a-amateur)
First Round

John Senden, Australia	34-32—66
Kim Felton, Australia	33-35—68
Justin Rose, England	36-32—68
Gareth Paddison, New Zealand	36-32—68
Richard Green, Australia	34-34—68
Brendan Jones, Australia	34-34—68
Stephen Allan, Australia	35-34—69
Nick Flanagan, Australia	34-35—69
Marcus Fraser, Australia	37-32—69
Peter O'Malley, Australia	35-35—70
Stuart Appleby, Australia	35-35—70
Nick Cullen, Australia	34-36—70
Mahal Pearce, New Zealand	35-35—70
Marc Leishman, Australia	36-34—70
Josh Geary, New Zealand	36-34—70
Paul Spargo, Australia	38-32—70
Timothy Wood, Australia	35-35—70
Mathew Goggin, Australia	36-35—71
Nick O'Hern, Australia	35-36—71
Peter Lonard, Australia	35-36—71

SOCCER

FIFA

CLUB WORLD CUP

PLAYOFF
At Yokohama, Japan
Thursday's result
Sanfrecce Hiroshima (Japan) 1, Auckland City (New Zealand) 0

UEFA

EUROPA LEAGUE

GROUP STAGE
Second Leg
Thursday's results
AEL Limassol (Cyprus) 3, Marseille (France) 0
Athletic Bilbao (Spain) 0, Sparta Prague (Czech Republic) 0
Bayer Leverkusen (Germany) 1, Rosenborg (Norway) 0
Bordeaux (France) 2, Newcastle United (England) 0
FC Copenhagen (Denmark) 1, Steaua Bucuresti (Romania) 1
FC Twente (Netherlands) 1, Helsingborgs IF (Sweden) 3
FK Dnipro (Ukraine) 4, AIK (Sweden) 0
Fenerbahce (Turkey) 0, Monchengladbach (Germany) 3
Genk (Belgium) 0, FC Basel (Switzerland) 0
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Israel) 2, Academica de Coimbra (Portugal) 0
Inter Milan (Italy) 2, Neftchi Baku (Azerbaijan) 2
Levante (Spain) 2, Hannover 96 (Germany) 2
Lyon (France) 2, Ironi Kiryat Shmona (Israel) 0
Maritimo (Portugal) 2, Club Brugge (Belgium) 1
NK Maribor (Slovenia) 1, Lazio (Italy) 4
Napoli (Italy) 1, PSV Eindhoven (Netherlands) 3
Partizan (Serbia) 1, Rubin Kazan (Russia) 1
Rapid Wien (Austria) 1, Metalist Kharkiv (Ukraine) 0
Tottenham Hotspur (England) 3, Panathinaikos (Greece) 1
Udinese (Italy) 0, Liverpool (England) 1
VfB Stuttgart (Germany) 0, Molde FK (Norway) 1
Viktoria Plzen (Czech Republic) 1, Atletico Madrid (Spain) 0
Young Boys (Switzerland) 3, Anzhi Makhachkala (Russia) 1

AHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Worcester	21	11	8	1	1	60	65	24
Manchester	21	10	8	2	1	55	53	23
St. John's	22	11	10	0	1	53	60	23
Portland	21	10	9	1	1	67	69	22
Providence	19	9	8	0	2	44	55	20

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Springfield	20	12	4	1	3	70	42	28
Connecticut	21	10	9	2	0	67	72	22
Bridgeport	21	10	10	0	1	64	74	21
Adirondack	20	9	11	0	0	52	60	18
Albany	18	5	8	0	5	40	52	15

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Syracuse	20	13	5	1	1	74	55	28
Binghamton	18	12	4	1	1	57	44	26
W-B/Scranton	20	13	7	0	0	58	46	26
Hershey	22	10	11	1	0	57	63	21
Norfolk	21	9	12	0	0	60	67	18

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTH DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Abbotsford	22	13	4	3	2	58	43	31
Lake Erie	23	12	9	1	1	73	72	26
Toronto	21	12	8	0	1	70	59	25
Rochester	19	9	8	2	0	63	59	20
Hamilton	18	7	9	1	1	38	57	16

MIDWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Rockford	22	12	9	0	1	73	67	25
Grand Rapids	20	11	7	1	1	67	60	24
Milwaukee	20	9	8	2	1	55	60	21
Chicago	20	9	8	2	1	56	62	21
Peoria	21	7	10	2	2	49	74	18

SOUTH

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Charlotte	22	12	8	0	2	72	64	26
Oklahoma City	20	11	6	1	2	66	59	25
Houston	20	11	6	1	2	67	59	25
Texas	21	11	8	1	1	53	59	24
San Antonio	22	8	11	0	3	58	65	19

Note: Two points awarded for a win, one for an overtime or shootout loss.
Thursday's result
Hershey 2 Norfolk 1
Lake Erie 3 Charlotte 2
Wednesday's results
Bridgeport 2 Connecticut 4
Peoria 2 Grand Rapids 1
Texas 2 Milwaukee 1 (OT)
San Antonio 4 Abbotsford 0
Friday's games
All Times Eastern
Springfield at St. John's, 6 p.m.
Lake Erie at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Adirondack at Rochester, 7:05 p.m.
Portland at Binghamton, 7:05 p.m.
Manchester at Providence, 7:05 p.m.
Hershey at W-B/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Hamilton at Syracuse, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Rockford, 8:05 p.m.
Houston at Texas, 8:30 p.m.
Grand Rapids at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 8
Bridgeport at Albany, 5 p.m.
Springfield at St. John's, 6 p.m.
Hamilton at Hershey, 7 p.m.
Syracuse at Adirondack, 7 p.m.
Connecticut at Manchester, 7 p.m.
Providence at Worcester, 7 p.m.
Rochester at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Portland at W-B/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Norfolk at Binghamton, 7:05 p.m.
Peoria at Texas, 8 p.m.
Oklahoma City at San Antonio, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Rockford, 8:05 p.m.

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-New England	9	3	0	.750	430	260
N.Y. Jets	5	7	0	.417	228	296
Miami	5	7	0	.417	227	249
Buffalo	5	7	0	.417	277	337

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Houston	11	1	0	.917	351	221
Indianapolis	8	4	0	.667	265	306
Tennessee	4	8	0	.333	248	359
Jacksonville	2	10	0	.167	206	342

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	9	3	0	.750	303	242
Pittsburgh	7	5	0	.583	254	230
Cincinnati	7	5	0	.583	302	260
Cleveland	4	8	0	.333	229	265

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Denver	9	3	0	.750	349	244
San Diego	4	8	0	.333	258	257
Oakland	3	9	0	.250	235	376
Kansas City	2	10	0	.167	188	322

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	7	5	0	.583	321	243
Washington	6	6	0	.500	312	301
Dallas	6	6	0	.500	280	295
Philadelphia	3	9	0	.250	217	320

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Atlanta	11	1	0	.917	317	229
Tampa Bay	6	6	0	.500	333	285
New Orleans	5	7	0	.417	321	327
Carolina	3	9	0	.250	235	292

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	8	4	0	.667	296	259
Chicago	8	4	0	.667	294	198
Minnesota	6	6	0	.500	262	272
Detroit	4	8	0	.333	300	315

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
San Francisco	8	3	1	.708	289	171
Seattle	7	5	0	.583	242	202
St. Louis	5	6	1	.458	221	267
Arizona	4	8	0	.333	186	234

x — clinched playoff berth; **y** — clinched division.

WEEK 14

Thursday's result
Denver at Oakland
Sunday's games — All Times Eastern
St. Louis at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Dallas at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.
Baltimore at Washington, 1 p.m.
San Diego at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Kansas City at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
Chicago at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Miami at San Francisco, 4:05 p.m.
New Orleans at N.Y. Giants, 4:25 p.m.
Arizona at Seattle, 4:25 p.m.
Detroit at Green Bay, 8:20 p.m.
Monday's game
Houston at New England, 8:30 p.m.

TRANSACTIONS

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

BOSTON RED SOX—Acquired RHP Kyle Kaminska from Pittsburgh to complete an earlier trade and assigned him to Pawtucket (IL). Agreed to terms with RHP Koji Uehara.
DETROIT TIGERS—Acquired 2B Jeff Kobernus from Boston Red Sox for INF-OF Justin Henry.
MINNESOTA TWINS—Acquired RHP Vance Worley and RHP Trevor May from Philadelphia for OF Ben Revere.
TAMPA BAY RAYS—Agreed to terms with 1B James Loney on a one-year contract.
TEXAS RANGERS—Sent RHP Wilfredo Boscan to San Diego to complete an earlier trade. Agreed to terms with 1B-DH Brandon Allen, RHP Jake Brigham, RHP Evan Meek and RHP Randy Wells on minor league contracts.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

ATLANTA BRAVES—Agreed to terms with OF Reed Johnson on a one-year contract.
NEW YORK METS—Traded LHP Kyle Lobstein to Detroit for cash.

NBA

TORONTO RAPTORS—Assigned F Quincy Acy to Bakersfield (NBADL).

NFL

BUFFALO BILLS—Signed OT Chris Scott from Tennessee's practice squad. Placed OT Chris Hairston on injured reserve.
CINCINNATI BENGALS—Signed K Josh Brown. Waived C Jeff Faine.
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS—Placed DL Allen Bailey on injured reserve. Signed LB Leon Williams.
NEW YORK GIANTS—Placed OT Sean Locklear on injured reserve. Signed OL Selvish Capers from the practice squad. Signed OL Paul Fenaroli to the practice squad.
NEW YORK JETS—Signed S Antonio Allen from the practice squad. Signed CB Donnie Fletcher to the practice squad.

ECHL

ECHL—Fined Ontario's Kyle Clifford an undisclosed amount for a violation of the league's exclusive equipment policy.

MLS

COLORADO RAPIDS—Signed MF Pablo Mastroeni to a one-year contract.

U.S. COLLEGE

AUBURN—Named Ellis Johnson defensive coordinator.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You can be successful on a material level but you will also have to take on some heavy responsibilities. Are you prepared to do that? It's important that you decide one way or the other before making your next move.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You may doubt that you are up to the task that has been set for you, but you must not let those doubts take hold. Think of life as a wonderful adventure. It's how you play the game.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Group activities are under the spotlight today and you may meet someone who has a profound effect on the way you look at the world. If you feel it is your destiny to do something special, you will soon get the chance.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If you want to make a name for yourself, now is the time to begin. Set new goals and start long-term projects. Just make sure you know what the consequences will be. This isn't for fun, this is serious.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Unexpected delays may frustrate you today, and maybe into the weekend, but there is nothing you can do about them. So, lighten up. The scenery may pass slowly but that gives you more time to enjoy it.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Your money situation may be going through an up and down phase, but the planets indicate that real wealth is within your grasp. You'll change the way you think about what you own and earn over the next 24 hours.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone you usually get along with so well is hard to get through to today. It's as if there is an invisible barrier between you. Don't worry, it's nothing serious. They just need to be left alone with their thoughts for a while.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
Don't worry if a plan or project you have been working on for months, maybe even years, is still not complete. It's a long-term project, after all. Having said that, see how far you can move it forward today.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
At some point today, you will realize that what seems like harmless enjoyment to you may not be so harmless to other people. It's important to remember that you don't live in a vacuum. Actions always have consequences.

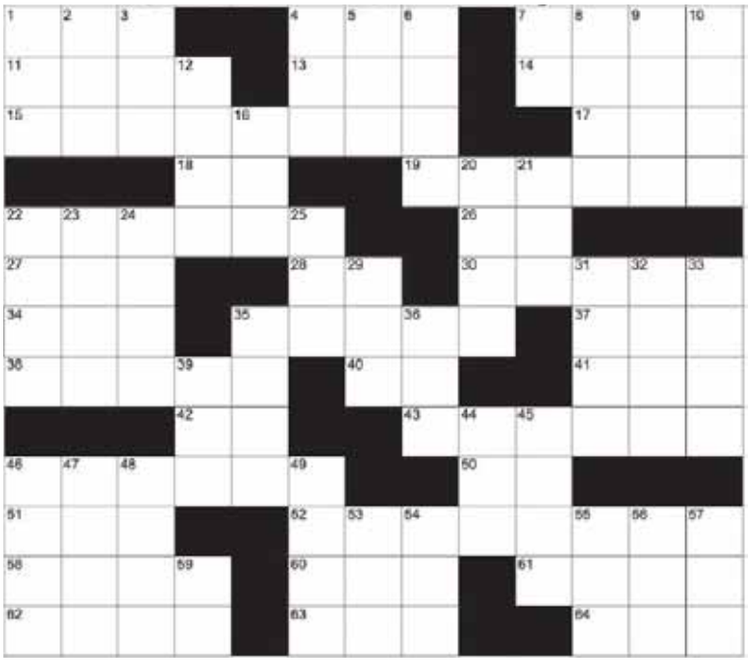
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Something will happen over the next two or three days that reminds you of your responsibilities. Most important of all is your duty to loved ones. How can you help ease a relative's pain?

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Others may wonder why you are so difficult to get through to but even an Aquarius needs to spend some time alone. Come the weekend you will be your old self again, open and happy and eager to share.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
The limitations and restrictions of the past few days will start to lift and by Monday, at the latest, you will be free to pursue your own interests. Hopefully, those limitations will have taught you the importance of timing. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword

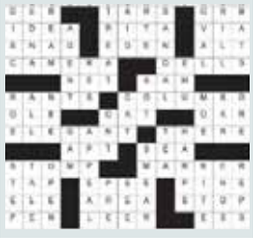
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. — carte (2 wds)
4. Family Ties actor: Michael J. —
7. A softened oath
11. Painted metalware
13. Mine yield
14. Withered
15. Type of stew
17. "The Crying Game" actor Stephen —
18. Commercial message
19. Seem
22. Where ends meet
26. Common Latin abbr.
27. Latin 101 verb
28. Contented sigh
30. Dims
34. Funnyman Conway
35. Rise and —
37. Fury
38. Cubic metre
40. Courtroom figure (abbr.)
41. For shame!
42. Apiece (abbr.)
43. Extremely bright
46. Designer McCartney
50. Musical note
51. — Ramsey
52. Sloppy
58. Crew needs
60. The Royal Canadian — Farce
61. Boxcar rider
62. Factual
63. On the authority of
64. Coal container

Down
1. Banking convenience
2. Role for Ed Asner
3. — My Children
4. Haze
5. Openings (anat.)
6. Warrior princess of TV
7. Plural suffix
8. "An Officer and a Gentleman" actor
9. Locale
10. Letter starter
12. Zest
16. Chemical suffix
20. Tube
21. Small green veggie
22. Broadway musical
23. Overlook
24. Italian capital
25. Bleachers cheer
29. Concealed
31. Boost
32. Lake near Niagara Falls
33. Flower starter
35. Fasten tightly
36. Henpeck
39. Family mem.
44. Brat
45. Child's card game: Go —
46. Photographed
47. Shed one of these
48. Beige shade
49. On the double
53. Fib
54. Like some verbs (abbr.)
55. Peg
56. Sash
57. Put on
59. Opposite of NW

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

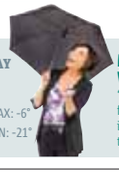
8		4		5		2	6	
	1	9						
			3					9
5		2	1					
7			6		5			2
					2	8		7
1					4			
						6	3	
	2	5		8		4		1

Yesterday's Sudoku

6	7	9	2	1	5	8	4	3
1	8	5	9	4	3	2	6	7
4	2	3	7	6	8	5	1	9
9	3	2	4	7	1	6	5	8
5	4	6	8	3	9	7	2	1
7	1	8	6	5	2	9	3	4
2	5	1	3	8	7	4	9	6
3	6	7	5	9	4	1	8	2
8	9	4	1	2	6	3	7	5

Weather

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MAX: -15° MIN: -16°	MAX: -15° MIN: -19°	MAX: -6° MIN: -21°



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2008 DODGE CALIBER SXT — $9,047

2007 CHRYSLER 300 TOURING — $10,497

2008 MITSUBISHI LANCER GTS — $12,831

2011 KIA FORTE EX — $12,861

2007 FORD F150 E/C 4X4 — $13,671

2007 JEEP LIBERTY SPORT — $13,901

2011 FORD FUSION SE — $14,233

2012 CHEVROLET MALIBU LS — $14,416

2011 DODGE GR. CARAVAN SXT — $15,341

2012 DODGE AVENGER SXT — $15,376

2012 CHEVROLET IMPALA LS — $15,876

2008 HONDA ACCORD COUPE EX — $16,319

2011 SUZUKI KIZASHI SE — $16,731

2009 NISSAN ALTIMA COUPE — $16,933

2010 DODGE CHARGER SXT — $17,978

2009 NISSAN MURANO SL AWD — $18,129

2009 GMC 1500 CREW SLE 4X4 Z71 — $18,243

2010 HYUNDAI GENESIS 2.0T — $18,764

2009 RAM 1500 Q/C 4X4 SLT — $18,963

2010 GMC 2500 E/C 4X4 SLE — $19,810

2009 GMC 1500 CREW SLE — $19,852

2010 GMC 2500 CREW 4X4 — $20,496

2011 FORD EDGE SEL AWD — $21,880

2013 HYUNDAI SONATA GLS — $21,975

2010 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT — $22,084

2011 RAM 2500 CREW 4X4 SLT — $23,975

2012 HONDA CIVIC SI — $24,751

2011 NISSAN TITAN CREW 4X4 SE — $24,233

2011 RAM 1500 CREW 4X4 LARAMIE — $24,376

2005 HUMMER H2 SUT — $24,833

2012 NISSAN MAXIMA SV — $24,932

2010 RAM 1500 Q/C 4X4 SPORT — $25,127

2011 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY — $25,942

2012 RAM 1500 Q/C 4X4 SLT — $26,030

2012 RAM 1500 CREW 4X4 SLT — $26,971

2012 CHRYSLER 300 LIMITED — $26,986

2011 JEEP GR. CHEROKEE AWD LAREDO — $27,598

2006 RAM 3500 M/C 4X4 LARAMIE — $28,217

2009 GMC YUKON SLT AWD — $28,935

2010 RAM 1500 CREW 4X4 LARAMIE — $30,678

2012 CHRYSLER 300C — $31,718

2013 FORD FLEX LIMITED AWD — $31,969

2012 CHEVROLET SUBURBAN LS AWD — $32,379

2012 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE LAREDO AWD — $32,976

2011 FORD F150 CREW 4X4 PLATINUM — $34,948

2009 CADILLAC ESCALADE EXT — $38,458

2010 CHEVROLET 2500 CREW 4X4 — $43,179

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AMVIC

Vehicles may not be exactly as illustrated. *Fiat 500 Giveaway applies to all vehicles purchased between Sept. 25/2012 and Dec.21/2012. Each purchase will be entered into a draw to take place Dec. 22, 2012. See details. 0% financing over 12 months, amortized over 96 months, OAC.

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Vehicles may not be exactly as illustrated. Example: 2013 Grand Vitara Urban, $191 bi-weekly payment with $1000 available OAC. Prices are plus GST. See dealer for details. Offers expire January 3, 2013.